

# Growing Fruit: Berries

## *Proper Care of Trees for Noxious Pest Avoidance*

### Important Notice:

Before planting fruit trees, it is the residential growers responsibility to familiarize oneself with the RDOS [Bylaw](#). It is necessary that proper care of fruit trees is taken to prevent & control pest infestations.

### Before Planting your Tree/ Shrub/ Bush

Berry bushes can only produce healthy fruit if home growers pay careful attention to sanitation, pest management, & harvest practices. If you are planting the tree for decorative purposes, consider planting an ornamental tree/ shrub that will be less bothersome, costly to care for & manage.

### General Berry Bush Care

**Sanitation:** Diligent sanitation practice will reduce the risk of pest infestation. Remove dead & decaying fruit & leaves from the tree & ground. Maintain a good weeding and visual inspection routine to avoid pests.

**Blueberry Pruning:** Bushes older than 5 years old require some pruning. Remove 1-2 of the oldest canes each year & remove any dead & diseased branches as needed to avoid pests & disease.

**Raspberry & Blackberry Pruning:** Raspberry & blackberry bushes require more pruning than blueberry bushes. In late March or early April, remove any dead or weak canes. Prune after harvest (spring if spring bearing variety, spring & fall if ever bearing variety) to cut out canes that have just finished producing.

**Mulching:** Use pine sawdust, compost, or peat moss around berry bush to control weeds & promote moisture levels in soil if needed. Cover crops are often useful to manage soil erosion & prevent pests.

**Harvesting:** Remove ALL fruit at harvest & make sure all diseased & insect-infested fruit is disposed of properly.



### Pest Avoidance & Management

**Important:** Avoid chemical intervention (pesticides) & use preventative strategies first. Keeping bushes healthy by prioritizing sanitation practice will help reduce pest and disease problems.

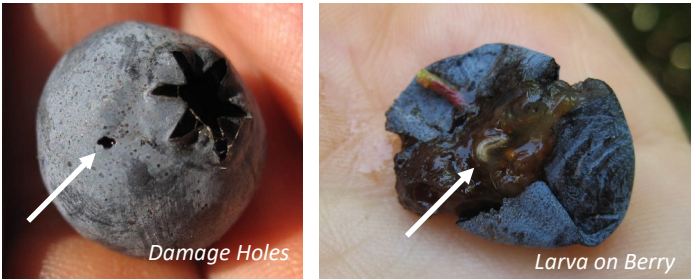
**Netting Shrub/ Bush:** To avoid bird damage, net berry bushes/ shrubs during the fruit bearing season.

**Pesticides (last resort):** If preventative measures are no longer adequate, consult professionals before use. Always begin with the least toxic product available. Chemical intervention is rarely needed with berries.

**Pesticide Stewardship:** Do not apply in daytime when bees are foraging, when wind speeds are high, or when rain is forecast.

# MOST COMMON BERRY BUSH PESTS

## Spotted Wing Drosophila (SWD) (25mm = 1 inch)



Carolyn Teasdale, BC Ministry of Agriculture



Photo by Brigitte Rozema, with permission © Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada as represented by the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food (2012).

**Identification:** Appears similar to other fruit flies. Males have a dark spot on each wing. Frequently check for damage holes & fruit damage, particularly before harvest.

**Management:** Effective sanitation & harvest practices are the best strategy. Seal infested fruit in plastic bags & freeze for 48 hours or bury infested fruit (2 feet deep) to kill the larvae.

## Brown Marmorated Stink Bug



Gary Bernon, USDA APHIS, Bugwood.org

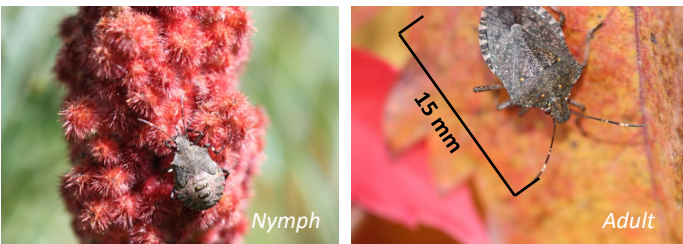


Photo Courtesy of the Government of BC

**Identification:** Distinguish from native look-a-likes by the presence of white bands on antennae. Feeding punctures may cause dead areas on fruit. Seal off all house entrances as adults prefer to overwinter inside buildings for warmth.

**Management:** Low numbers can be removed by hand/ shop vacuum. Insecticides are not recommended to homeowners. Report any suspected sightings.

## Cherry Fruitworm



Tracy Hueppelsheuser, BC Ministry of Agriculture



Kristine Ferris

**Identification:** When larvae emerge from fruit (early August), the frass (excrement) remains, which is a good indicator of pest presence. Larvae overwinter on wounds under bark. Larvae feed inside berries & cause tunneling & shriveling.

**Management:** Larvae & eggs can be removed by hand. Remove overwintering areas (weeds, pruning's, wounds).

## Additional Info

### Other Pests to Look out for

Cutworms, Aphids, Weevils, Leafhoppers, Leafrollers, Sawflies, Tent Caterpillars, Scale Insects, Mites etc.

### Detailed Pest Descriptions Found Here

[Home & Garden Pest Management Guide for BC Pests of Fruit Trees.](#)

### Okanagan Invasive Species Online

This is a useful resource for information on all invasive insect pests of concern in the region. This can be found at: [www.OISO.ca](http://www.OISO.ca)



### Plant Me Instead Factsheet

For ornamental & native tree or shrub alternatives for fruit bearing trees & shrubs, visit [Tree Fruit Pest Control | RDOS](#)

### Brown Marmorated Stink Bug Note

This is a very destructive pest that affects a wide range of fruits & vegetables. Send images or samples of the suspected stink bug to the BC Ministry of Agriculture or report [online](#).

Contact your local nursery/ greenhouse if you are unsure about what management strategy should be practiced & how to properly care for your fruit tree.

Noxious Pest Program Video Media:

[Regional District Okanagan Similkameen \(RDOS\) - YouTube](#)