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[Home](#)[About Us](#)[Search](#)[Newsletters](#)[Weather /
Climate](#)[Viticulture](#)[Pest
management](#)[Scouting guide](#)[Publications](#)[Calendar of
events](#)[Industry links](#)[Contacts](#)

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Grape flea beetle

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[Home](#) > [Scouting guide](#) > grape flea beetle

The grape flea beetle (or steely beetle) is a shiny, metallic dark blue. It may jump when disturbed. The insect overwinters as an adult. This stage feeds directly on young buds, beginning when conditions warm in the spring. Vineyard borders adjacent to woods or other protected areas are most affected. Adults damage swelling buds by hollowing them out. Their damage may be confused with cutworm damage because both species feed during bud swell. The level of injury varies from year to year and is worse when cool temperatures slow bud development.

Larvae are yellow-brown with a dark head and feed on clusters and leaf surfaces. Damage is greatest at borders but rarely reaches economic levels.



Adult. 5mm.



Larvae feeding on a leaf.



Red arrow points to larva with ruler shown to indicate size.



Larva.

Additional information

- Search [MSU Extension News for Agriculture](#) site
- [Search MSU Fruit CAT Alert](#) newsletter for articles. Type in keyword: flea beetle
- Recommendations from the [Michigan Fruit Management Guide](#)

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Funding for this web site provided by [Project GREEN](#), [American Farmland Trust](#), [EPA Region 5's Strategic Agricultural Initiative](#) program, [The National Foundation for IPM Education](#), the [Center for Agricultural Partnerships](#) and the [MSU Integrated Pest Management Program](#) in collaboration with [MSU Extension](#) and the [Michigan Agricultural Experiment Station](#). Partially support from [NC-IPM Center](#).