

The Weekly **MAINE AUTO** Shopper

To place your ad in the Maine Auto Shopper
PLEASE CONTACT JEFF ORCUTT
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Prevent bugs, sap and other substances from ruining a vehicle

BY METRO NEWS SERVICE

Keeping vehicles looking pristine requires care and diligent cleaning. So many day-to-day activities and environmental materials have the potential to damage the finish on cars and trucks.

While winter weather and chemicals used to keep roadways passable are often blamed for affecting the appearance of cars and trucks, winter is not the only time of year when substances can cause damage to vehicles.

Spring and summer are prime seasons for sap, birds and insects. These

times of year tend to see an uptick in road work as well, and such projects can contribute to damage caused by loose asphalt, gravel and tar.

Addressing problems resulting from tree sap, insect and bird droppings and tar may not be something to look forward to, but it is necessary to keep cars looking pristine.

Tree sap

According to Cars.com, an automotive information resource and vehicle sales website, although tree sap won't cause immediate

damage to vehicle paint, it should not be ignored. Over time, sap can become more difficult to remove, etch through the clear coat on the vehicle and cause discoloration. When the temperature is hot, damage from sap can accelerate.

On windows and windshields, drivers may be able to gently remove dried sap with a razor blade. However, use cleaning products on more delicate paint.

Automotive stores sell specialty sap and tar cleaners. Otherwise, you can try rubbing alcohol. It may take a few attempts to

remove sap entirely.

Insects and bird droppings

Spattered bugs and avian surprises dropped from above can be a messy, unsightly nuisance.

Their acidic composition also may cause them to damage paint over time. Bugs and droppings can be sticky, so you will need to work with something that will remove the splatter without removing the paint in the process. A product like WD-40 may help.

This oily product is normally used on rust and hinges. When applied

with a cloth and allowed to penetrate the stain, it can loosen difficult-to-remove sticky substances. Always test any product you use in an inconspicuous spot first to make sure it doesn't damage or discolor your the paint.

Insects or droppings that are fresh may come off relatively easily with a good washing or hosing off of the car. Retailers also sell specialty insect sponges to remove bugs and other debris.

Tar

Soap and water will do

little to remove tar and other petroleum-based products from vehicles. Commercial tar removal products use a strong solvent or detergent to loosen the tar.

This may include kerosene, mineral spirits or another item mixed with lubricants. Go slowly and use caution so that you remove the tar and not the paint.

Drivers who are hesitant to clean their vehicles of common residue can have their cars or trucks professionally detailed, leaving the work in the hands of experts.

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NADA \$20,450

Adam's: \$17,500



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NADA \$27,950

Adam's: \$15,495



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4.0L V6, 6 SPD AUTO, 77,000 MILES

NADA \$12,225

Adam's: \$10,200



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3.5L TWIN TURBO V6, SUPERCREW, 5.5' SHORT BOX, 30,803 MILES

NADA \$32,100

Adam's: \$26,000



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MOUNTAINEER

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