

Lawn Care

A discussion of the vital problems of lawn making and maintenance

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CHICKWEED

Varieties and Cures

THERE are many varieties of Chickweed but the two which are found most frequently in lawns are the Common Chickweed and the Mouse-ear Chickweed. We shall comment first upon the weed in general and then describe in detail the two species.

In spite of its frail appearance, chickweed is probably the hardiest and most persistent weed on earth. One authority has this to say:

"I have picked green and thrifty stems, bearing buds, flowers and seeds, within a yard of a melting snow bank, during a January thaw."

Though the seeds of chickweed are small they retain their vitality for many years. Common chickweed is a familiar pest all over the world while the mouse-ear variety is at home in North America and may be found as far north as the Arctic Circle.

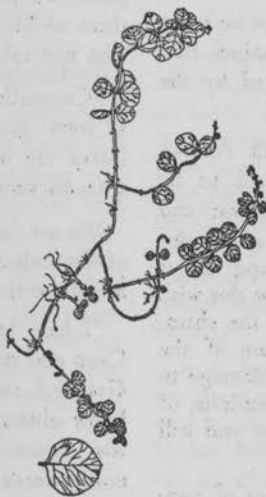
Common chickweed is an annual and

propagates from seeds. It blooms throughout the year and may be found in gardens, meadows, cultivated fields and waste places as well as in lawns. The leaves are usually not more than a half inch in length. They are ovate, smooth, and the upper ones so numerous that the plant often covers the ground like a green mat.

Chickweed has small white flowers with five star-like petals. This star is set within a larger green one, formed of five oblong, pointed, hairy sepals, joined at their base. The seeds are very numerous and are round, brown and flattened.

Mouse-ear chickweed is a perennial; blooms from May until September, and propagates from seeds. The leaves of this species are usually oblong, sometimes lance shaped, and not as might be supposed, resembling the ears of a mouse. The whole plant is covered with downy hairs giving the plant a dirty grayish

cast. The weed flowers in loose clusters, the central one solitary and always the oldest. Usually but one flower in a cluster is open at one time.



Common Chickweed

A side view of the illustration will give you a better idea of how chickweed appears in lawns.



CONTROL OF CHICKWEED.

In cultivated ground chickweed is not apt to become troublesome as its shallow growing roots are usually destroyed by tillage. But it is the killing of this weed in lawns which interests us. Spraying with Iron Sulfate is the oldest remedy. This may be done just as in the case of checking dandelions and plantain, by the use of one pound of Iron Sulfate (Copperas) Crystals in one to one and a half gallons of water sprinkled or sprayed on about 100 square feet of area. This treatment is especially effective on young chickweed plants. The grass may be stained temporarily by the spray but it will recover.

A newer remedy but perhaps no more effective is the use of Ammonium Sulfate. Says a bulletin published by the Golf Association:

"Burn your chickweed with Ammonium Sulfate. Water the area to be treated so chickweed will be wet and then sprinkle a small amount of the dry chemical on these patches and let it stand for one day. Then follow this with a thorough watering to wash the chemical down into the soil. Some of the grass may be burned but the damage to it is only temporary. These chemicals, of course, possess fertilizing value and will benefit the grass."

In real wet weather the plant of common chickweed can easily be pulled out by hand.

We shall welcome, for later publication, suggestions my any of our readers as to their successful encounters with chickweed. If you have found one of the above remedies better than the other or a third one still more effective, sit right down and tell us about it, today.

The Low Down

On Citronella

OUR HOPES of bringing disaster to the mosquito family have been blasted. The chapter on Citronella Grass closes with this letter from the Dutch Colonial Government at Batavia on the Island of Java:

"Citronella Grass is cultivated for the purpose of the essential oil which it contains and which is obtained by distillation with steam. * * * Planting of this grass never takes place by means of seeds, which for this reason are never gathered. I will try to send you a few plants by parcel post. [We shall send these to Mr. J. Q. Sherman of Dayton, who first asked about this grass.]

"Citronella is not to be considered as a lawn grass because its stems and leaves are very coarse and in tropical climates very long."

We are further indebted to Mr. Meyer of the Indiana Botanic Gardens at Hammond for the following:

"I have your interesting folder LAWN CARE and note your article on Citronella Grass. I can tell you all you want to know about this grass. It grows from five to ten feet tall and the blades resemble reeds and are altogether too thick and coarse to ever make a lawn. Furthermore, Citronella is not hardy. It would be suitable for planting around ponds in Southern Florida only. We use the oil of Citronella in some of our products and have had plants growing in our conservatory—where they died. You can purchase clumps of the plant from the Royal Palm Nurseries, Anevo, Florida."



IMPORTANT

HEREAFTER LAWN CARE will be mailed to you in a distinctive envelope appropriately labeled. Watch for the next issue, which will come that way. We mention this fact especially because in future LAWN CARE will be mailed under special permit mail which eliminates the necessity of affixing stamps.

If you are not in the habit of opening your own mail, we suggest passing the word along that you want *everything* from Scotts. This is the sixth regular issue of LAWN CARE. If you have missed any and would like to keep a complete file for future reference, just ask for the ones you do not have.

Advantages of Fall Seeding

WE ALMOST feel like apologizing for further comment upon this subject and yet there are so many reasons for the sowing of seed in fall that they bear repeating annually. Grass always grows best in cool, wet weather, such as we are apt to have in September. Furthermore you enable your grass to get a good start at a season when weeds are not growing vigorously. But the most important advantage in fall seeding is the fact that the grass will stool or tiller out, thus establishing itself securely before freezing weather.

Golf clubs, airports, and other large quantity users of seed do at least sixty-five per cent of their annual seeding in the fall. The small buyer of seed for the home lawn still does the reverse but we find our own customers gradually changing. During the past five years there has been a steady trend in the right direction. State experiment stations and writers on horticultural subjects are constantly endeavoring to educate the pub-

lic to the advisability of fall seeding. The few instances where spring seeding is safer include the extreme northern states where the winters are very severe.

Grass may also be fed with fertilizer in the fall to encourage deep rooting and a luxuriant growth for successful wintering.



Turf Builder Does Wonders

"I FIND that the Turf Builder has been doing wonders and as I have many requests for it you may send me 500 pounds more."

ORA M. KENRICH,
Landscape Gardener,
Argo, Ill.

During the spring season we shipped 100 tons of Scott's Turf Builder for use on lawns. In very rare instances we have had reports of burning. Many cases have been followed up and we were told that the grass revived and seed healthier than ever. In most cases it seemed that the Turf Builder had been put on unevenly or patchy so that some of these places received an overdose, causing the burning.

It is best to make application when the grass is dry as otherwise too much of the chemical will stick to the grass blades. Apply, if possible, *before* a rain but not during.

If applied evenly at the rate of 10 pounds per thousand square feet there is no danger at all of burning the grass. Of course, right during a period of very hot weather, it is possible to take extra precaution by mixing the Turf Builder with three or four times its bulk of sand or screened top soil. The lawn should then be given a good soaking so the material will be washed into the soil. Where a new lawn is being made as much as



twenty pounds of Turf Builder per thousand square feet may be worked right into the top soil. We suggest that this be done a week or two before the seed is sowed.



Death to Dandelions?

IN "The Home Garden" section of a newspaper we recently read an article under the heading printed above. Here it is for your consideration:

"Dandelion eradicators in the form of chemical formulae are now staple articles of the horticultural trade and are efficient if applied according to directions. The active principle in most of them is sulfate of iron, which may be purchased by itself and applied according to directions furnished with it.

"Much interest has been manifested in the new preparation devised by British scientists which has come into popular use abroad known as "lawn sand." The great advantage of this preparation is that it is easily mixed at home and easily applied and a spray is not necessary. The mixture consists of one-half pound of sulfate of iron, one and one-half pounds of sulfate of ammonia, a valuable lawn fertilizer, and nine pounds of sand, the whole being thoroughly mixed together.

"The British authorities advise using the 'lawn sand' at the rate of four or five ounces to a square yard. For practical purposes without scales handy to measure ounces, a tablespoonful to an ounce may be taken, heaped moderately. This proportion apparently is designed for one application a season and to be thoroughly watered in after application.

"The 'lawn sand' should not be expected to accomplish the mirable of abolishing the dandelions over night. Good results will be apparent at once but the process of ridding the lawn of all of

them will be slow. The stimulation to growth offered by the sulfate of ammonia will smother and crowd out dandelions not killed by the sulfate of iron.

"The sulfate of iron may blacken the grass after it is applied but this should cause no alarm as the grass is not permanently injured, but will return with a richer green and a heavier growth within a short time. The dandelions which are blackened by the iron salt will not make any such recovery.

"The materials for the lawn sand are easily procurable at any seed house so far as chemicals are concerned and the sand is, of course, at hand at any building supply house. The lawn sand acts as a weed destroyer and a fertilizer at the same time, an unusual effect."

OUR REACTION.

It has been our understanding that the effectiveness of Iron Sulfate on dandelions was due to its action upon the leaves, flowers and stems of the plants. The theory of the "lawn sand" treatment is that the chemicals when washed into the ground will bring about a condition which causes dandelions to vacate. If any one who reads these lines has had experience with a dandelion remedy of this kind, will you not write us about it? There is much being written about weed fighting these days which sounds fine until you try it. We should like to spend enough time on this question, because of the general havoc wrought by dandelions, to arrive at some very definite conclusions and then pass them along to our readers. The Green Keeper of a well-known golf club in the Chicago district has some very positive ideas on the subject and we shall print an article by him in the next issue of *LAWN CARE*. Look for it. Meanwhile won't you personally contribute some thoughts to this discussion?