

Lawn Care

A discussion of the vital problems of lawn making and maintenance

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A Persistent Weed

HEAL-ALL or Self-Heal is not as familiar as the species discussed in preceding bulletins but when it once establishes itself in your lawn you will not soon forget it. The illustration shows how thickly the plants grow and how utterly hopeless it is for grass to attempt to come through such a mass of foliage. Heal-all sounds like a patent medicine—and, as a matter of fact, it does possess some medicinal value. It grows in all parts of the world, so may be found in impure imported as well as domestic seeds. In some countries it is known by other names such as Hock-Heal, Heart-of-the-Earth, Carpenter's Herb and Sickwort. Heal-All, (its familiar American name,) is a perennial, propagates by seeds and by creeping rootstalks or nodes, and seeds any time between June and November.



HEAL-ALL (*Prunella Vulgaris*). A native of this country—very troublesome in lawns.

It is found most frequently in waste places or in open woods, so the best opportunity to introduce it into a lawn is when top-soil from uncultivated places is hauled in.

When Heal-All is beheaded by the mower it is apt to stool out and take complete possession of a lawn. It adapts itself to its environment, often producing flowers and going to seed when not more than two inches tall. At other times, when unmolested, it may reach a height of 10 to 12 inches.

The blooms, which form in clusters of three, appear in various shades of purple, some very deep in color and others almost white. The seeds are the shape of ovoid nutlets.

They ripen and drop all summer long.

METHOD OF CONTROL.

It was discovered by a botanist who was using Iron Sulfate to kill Chickweed that Heal-All succumbed very



quickly to the same treatment, the leaves blackening and falling off while the buds ceased to grow and in a few days rotted. Without leaf growth the roots cannot survive. About an eight per cent solution should be used. A light application with a spray pump should do the work, and even though the grass may be temporarily discolored it will recover.

Date of Seeding

THE advantages of fall seeding of lawns have been enumerated many times in *LAWN CARE*. Results from seeding at that time are so much better that one wonders why all lawns are not seeded in September or October.

Sometimes, however, certain conditions make it impossible to get the ground ready for seeding in early fall. Then the logical question is whether it is better to seed in late fall or defer the work until the following spring.

TESTS CONCLUSIVE.

The United States Department of Agriculture is trying to answer that question in a series of tests being conducted at Arlington Farm near Washington, D. C. Four different types of grass mixtures have been planted during each month of the year beginning in the fall of 1930. Their general results show what we would expect, namely, that the fall plots are by far the best. However, the surprising thing is that plots seeded in December, 1930 and 1931, compare very well with those seeded in early fall.

This does not mean that we should wait until Christmas to sow our seed but it does indicate that even winter may be better than spring for sowing lawn seed in some years. Obviously, this would be impracticable in localities having a more severe climate than that at Washington, D. C., although it would be possible in many places during a mild winter like that experienced in 1931-32.

ADVANTAGES OF LATE SEEDING.

One reason why winter seeding may give better results than spring seeding is because the seed is in the ground ready to sprout as soon as the ground gets warm. If we defer seeding until spring then it is necessary to wait until the ground dries sufficiently so a seed bed can be prepared.



Should Lawns be Covered in Winter?

ACCORDING to a majority of opinions, NO. In speaking of a cover we have in mind leaves, manure, straw or anything used primarily as a protection. Golf clubs frequently cover a bent green by giving it a top dressing of one-fourth inch of screened soil or compost. This may also be done to a lawn with the thought of protecting the roots of the grass from undue exposure. The top soil itself will be helpful and the grass may not heave as much as it might otherwise. It isn't considered good practice, however, to place a complete covering over a lawn because the grass may be encouraged to grow at a time when according to nature's plan it should be dormant. An application of well rotted manure early in the spring before the frost is out of the ground is not a bad plan.

Red Ants Banished

“WE are bothered in this locality just at this time with the big red ants which give us considerable worry, and about the best remedy to rid ourselves of them (the price taken into account) is to pour about a quart of gasoline into their lairs, cover the entire outlet over with paper, and then in turn cover the paper, edges and all, with earth. The next morning the entire colony is nil.”—C. B. MITCHELL, Landscape Architect, Garden City, Kans.