

Lawn Care

A discussion of the vital problems of lawn making and maintenance

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FRIEND and FOE IS THIS WEED

YARROW, (*Achillea Millefolium*).

Other English names for this weed are Milfoil, Thousand-leaf, Sanguinary, Bloodwort, Soldiers' Woundwort, Nose-

bleed Weed. This is one of the few weeds that cannot be classified as a serious pest. It is not particularly unsightly, the leaves being fern-like and rather pretty. These leaves do, however, lie flat upon the ground, tending to smother out other grasses. If allowed to go to seed the plants will grow two feet tall. Naturally they are not permitted to produce seed in the lawn but being a perennial, propagate by means of root stalks as well as seeds. In pasture and waste lands where allowed to grow unmolested Yarrow blooms between June and October. The seeding time is August to November. Yarrow grows

throughout North America and in most parts of the world. It is a very hardy weed, thriving in almost any soil and being indifferent to tropic heat or arctic cold. The Latin name reveals the fact

that Yarrow was named for the invulnerable Achilles who, it is said, used the herb for the cure of his Myrmidons wounded at the siege of Troy. It is known that the plant has some medicinal value and its dried leaves and flowers bring a fair price in the drug market.



YARROW, in full bloom

Tough Root System

In addition to the fern-like leaves which at the base of a fully matured plant are about 10 inches long, there are white flowers appearing in a dense, flat-topped, compound corymbis. The roots are horizontal and tough and cling strongly to the parent plant. The foliage is strong scented and has a bitter taste (probably the reason it is used for medicine). Cattle avoid the plant for that reason but may eat it in dry fodder, in which case it becomes very damaging to the quality of dairy products. In some parts of the world the pure seed of Yarrow is obtainable, indicating that it has some use as a growing

crop. Business friends of ours in Germany say that Yarrow is not cultivated there but that the seed is hand collected where it grows wild. "It is used for sheep pastures and also in chemists' shops as a



medical drug.”

Writes an English seedsman: “Yarrow is certainly not considered a weed in this country. At one time it was used in quite considerable quantities but now in a very small way. It is always in sheep pasture where it is considered a very useful plant. The seed has been known to command a price of \$2.00 per pound.”

Possible Airport Grass

It is possible that Yarrow, while now considered a weed, may yet become a useful plant in this country. As a matter of fact, the grass is now being considered for use on airports principally because of the tenacity with which the foliage clings to the roots, also because of the tough root system itself. The thick, finely laced leaves adhere to the ground and form a sort of carpet which may prove quite useful in keeping down dust, one of the serious airport problems.

Means of Control

Yarrow is one of the few weeds for which there is no remedy recommended other than hand digging. Because the roots though spreading, are attached so securely to the parent plant a whole colony of Yarrow may be ousted in one pull if the ground is soft. Seed production may, of course, be prevented by close mowing. Many do not regard Yarrow seriously because it is not unsightly and is preferable to coarse ugly weeds if weeds you must have. However, it shouldn't be allowed to take the place of desirable grasses. Most impure lawn mixtures contain many thousand seeds of Yarrow per pound.

Earthworms Next

WEEDS will have a rest in the mid-summer issue of LAWN CARE and the feature article will be on the subject of Earthworms and their elimination from a lawn. You will be surprised to learn how much study has been put upon



Note the elaborate root system of Yarrow

this matter and what interesting facts have been brought to light.



Appreciates Ivy Advice

YOUR bulletin of February, 1930, on Ground Creeping Ivy is what we have been waiting and looking for, for quite a number of years. With the simple treatment that you outline it should be no trouble to get rid of this, one of the very worst of all lawn pests.

R. S. ISAACSON,
Princeton, Ill.



“Your Turf Builder is a perfect wonder.”

CLARENCE GRIGGS,
Ottawa, Ill.



Grass Hunting in Africa

IN a recent issue of one of the farm papers we noted a very interesting article by L.W. Kephart of the U. S. Department of Agriculture written after his return from East Africa.

We learn that for thirty years there has been a systematic introduction of new grasses from foreign countries, during which time 80,000 plants have been brought to this country for experimental purposes. A large portion, of course, are doomed to failure because they are not adapted to conditions here but many of our modern improved varieties owe their beginning to this process; for example numerous cereals, cotton, soybeans, alfalfa and various fruits and vegetables. In the field of grasses there are notably the fescues.

Mr. Kephart traveled thousands of miles in East Africa and sent back seeds of 150 different grasses from which there may emerge some outstanding varieties which will be a blessing to either the farmer or home owner. This research on the part of the government is constantly going on. It is a part of the general program of the Department of Agriculture to discover and classify new plants of every description for the profit and pleasure of our people.

Note: Mr. Kephart has been good enough to write us about two possible lawn grasses which his trip brought to light. We shall tell you about them in the next issue of LAWN CARE.



Scott Publications

The following may be had for the asking:

Scott's Seed Guide, a 72-page book of valuable information for the man who farms.

Bent Lawns, an illustrated booklet which tells how to make and maintain a

Creeping Bent Lawns.

Lawns, a small booklet of condensed facts about the making of a new lawn and the improving of an old one.

Converting to Creeping Bent, a folder which explains four methods of remaking and improving an old lawn by using Bent.

In addition to the above we will send to anyone a full set of the issues of *LAWN CARE* which have preceded this one. There have been nine and the following lawn pests have been discussed: Plantain, Crab-grass, Dandelions, Moss, Grubs and Beetles, Chickweed, Buckhorn, and Ground Ivy.



Dandelion Eradication

AS promised in a previous issue of this paper, we are glad to reprint an article appearing recently in *GOLFDOM Magazine* on the subject of Dandelion and Plantain eradication. The author is Mr. John Mac Gregor, Greenkeeper of the Chicago Golf Club.

I have tried every device and method which I thought might combat them. First, I tried cutting them under the ground, and I found they had increased instead of decreased in number; where one was, six or seven showed up from the same plant, so the pest was multiplied a thousand fold. Then I tried gasoline. I took an ordinary oil can and soldered a spike with a sharp point to the spout. The spike extending an inch and a half beyond the end of the spout, this was pushed into the heart of the dandelion and a small amount of the gasoline deposited in the wound, which was very effective, but an expensive cure. Then there was the danger of poisoning the soil.

During this period we wrote to the Department of Agriculture at Washington for information on the eradication of dandelions. When the information came, I immediately set to work on this new system. We bought a power sprayer of 200 gallons capacity, also a potato sprayer attachment, which was attached behind the outfit.



The formula was one and a half pounds iron sulphate (copperas) to one gallon of water, the solution to be applied with 150 pounds' pressure. I followed the instructions, choosing one of the worst infested areas I could find. The day following the application I looked over the result of the experiment and was disappointed. All that could be noticed was the leaves of the dandelions were spotted with rust. Then I noticed that where the wheels of the sprayer had traveled the leaves were entirely black. I decided we had the correct formula, but the method of application would not give the desired results. The first dandelions I sprayed were just as strong as they were before I started. During this period I was trying to devise ways and means whereby this solution could be handled and applied with dispatch.

At this time we still had horses and they were the only means by which this sprayer could be navigated. Anyone who has had anything to do with horses knows that hauling a 200-gallon sprayer, loaded, is real work, and that they must be given a breathing spell quite frequently to enable you to have them the following day, especially in hot weather. The result was, before I had covered half of the rough, the wheels had bruised the leaves, I must devise some means of bruising the leaves so the iron could penetrate, and hit on the idea of using a chain drag which had been used during the construction of the course. I am glad to say this has proven to be the death knell of the dandelion, although success was not to come just yet.

When we got the first few shipments of iron sulphate it was coarse and hard to dissolve. Upon investigation I found we could purchase granulated or sugar iron sulphate. This I found could be dissolved in less than half the time. Then I procured six fifty-gallon barrels and knocked the heads out and used them for dissolving, putting 100 pounds of iron sulphate in each, dissolving with sufficient water. Three of the barrels are enough for a load in a 200 gallon tank. The other three barrels are dissolving while the load is being emptied on the course; when the men return, these three are pumped into the tank. Every time three barrels are emptied, the material is put in for the next load. I

use a portable double-action suction pump for pumping the solution into a tank, using a two-inch suction and a two-inch outlet hose.

After two years' experimenting, we purchased a Fordson tractor. This was the first time results really began to show, as I found the rough could be sprayed in a week, and that five successive sprayings two weeks apart would kill ninety-eight per cent of the dandelions. The only ones left were some of the very largest, which were very easily destroyed with a weed stinger and gasoline.

The success of this treatment is evidenced by the fact that the treated areas are free from dandelions.

Do not use iron sulphate on bent turf, either seeded or stolons. It will kill out badly.

Mr. Mac Gregor supplements this interesting article with a letter to us in which he further expresses his satisfaction with his present method of eradicating dandelions. He also says:

"The best method of application for lawns is a fifty-gallon spray barrel on wheels so that it can be moved about. It is not necessary to have a pressure pump. A hand operated pump will be satisfactory. The soil should not be saturated with the material. It is only necessary to spray the foliage, then it should be dragged immediately before the material has a chance to dry on the foliage. You will find at the end of two weeks the dandelions have made a new growth and it is only by the continual killing of the new foliage that the vitality of the plant is sapped. Finally there is nothing left."

The equipment to be used in carrying out Mr. Mac Gregor's plan would of course depend upon the size of the area. Only on large lawns or extensive grounds would the fifty-gallon barrel be necessary. The type of container to be used should be determined by the lawn area which needs to be treated. To carry out the dragging idea either a steel door mat or a heavy plank pulled over the lawn should suffice.