

Lawn Care

A discussion of the vital problems of lawn making and maintenance

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Creeping Buttercup

European Immigrant

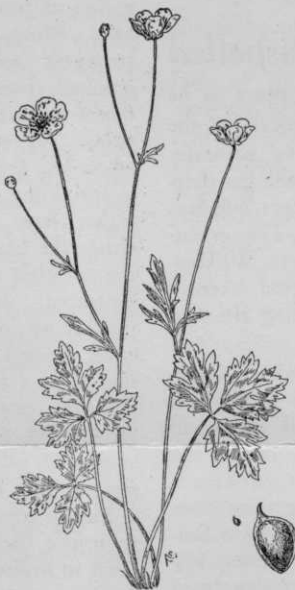
OCCASIONALLY we shall introduce a weed which does not frequent all sections of the country, yet where appearing freely it causes serious damage to lawns. Such a weed is Creeping Buttercup. On the Atlantic seaboard all the way from Nova Scotia to Virginia it is quite common, especially in lawns that are poorly drained. Being an immigrant from Europe it apparently received such a cordial welcome that there was no inclination to go any farther west. Nevertheless in the east, west, and middle west there are several other varieties of buttercup which would be classified as native.

PREFERS THE EAST.

The east produces very few grasses from which seed is harvested for the market. Consequently such weeds as Creeping Buttercup have no direct means of spreading elsewhere. On the contrary, weeds of the middle west maturing at harvest time with the different grasses that are used in lawn mixtures have the opportunity of making their presence felt in the far corners of the country.

FLOWERS QUITE PICTURESQUE.

Creeping Buttercup isn't particularly objectionable—in fact it is not without some decorative virtue. The golden yellow blooms are rather pretty but after all they don't belong in a lawn. As the name would imply, Creeping Buttercup has the faculty of taking possession of the section of one's lawn to the exclusion of anything else. After the early bloom is past the plant devotes its energy to throwing out numerous slender runners one to three feet long, from every joint of which a young plant may take root. In short the plants propagate by means of both seeds and runners. The blooms appear any time between May and July while the seeding period is between late June and August.



CREeping BUTTERCUP

Ranunculus repens

Illustration courtesy Michigan Agricultural Experiment Station

MEANS OF CONTROL.

Where Creeping Buttercup has formed in patches there is nothing to do except spade it up. Where there are only a few scattered plants they should be dug out by hand before the first seed develops. It is useless to resow a lawn that is infested with Creeping Buttercup without first digging the plants out. The grass will not be able to overcome them. As far as we can determine no chemical used as a spray will



entirely destroy this weed, although a bulletin of the Maryland Experiment Station published back in 1911 reports good results from an Iron Sulfate spray. The Buttercups thus treated, however, were apparently of the ordinary meadow Buttercup species and not the more persistent Creeping Buttercup. Heavy fertilization is recommended by one authority as a possible means of discouraging Buttercup. Another quite significant thing is that this weed appears most frequently on poorly drained soils so an important step in control would be the remedying of faulty drainage conditions in the lawn.



Dandelions and Plantain Dispelled

IRON SULFATE still appears to be the most successful chemical for the destruction of dandelions and plantain. Time after time it has done the job thoroughly *but* you mustn't expect wonders from a single application. The greenkeeper of a golf course near Wilkinsburg, Pennsylvania, commented recently on his experience in controlling the two weeds mentioned above.

It seems that his course was right in the midst of a number of abandoned farms so that it caught all the weed seeds which emanated from them. He had a real problem on his hands. This is how he met it. Five applications, two weeks apart, were made of an Iron Sulfate solution prepared by dissolving 1½ pounds of Iron Sulfate (granulated form) per gallon of water. He ran this solution through four thicknesses of cheese cloth. The area was so large that a power sprayer of 200 gallon capacity was used. Spray nozzles were used to distribute the material and ahead of the spray a drag was improvised consisting of several steel door mats. Their function was to bruise these plants so that the

solution would penetrate the stems. The fairways and rough of the course in question were so covered with dandelions and plantain that the five applications were necessary to put them out of business. The presence of these weeds in most lawns should not be so abundant as to require more than three iron sulfate applications.

SPECIFIC STRENGTH NOT IMPORTANT.

The method here explained is quite similar to that explained in the March-April, 1930 *LAWN CARE*. It will also be noted that where the experiences of three persons in applying iron sulfate have been related, the strength of the solution used has varied from 1½ pounds in 1 gallon of water to 1½ pounds in 4 gallons. Note, however, that where the strongest solution was used it was strained through cheese cloth which no doubt removed some of the coarser particles. We suggest the weaker solution where the application is being made with a sprinkling can. The flow should be rather free. Where a spray pump of either the hand or power variety is used the solution might safely be more concentrated. It is estimated that 1½ pounds of iron sulfate in solution will cover about 350 square feet (10x35). On this basis a lawn of 10,000 square feet or about one fourth of an acre would require 45 pounds of iron sulfate in about 60 to 70 gallons of water. We suggest that before the spray is applied, a drag of some nature, not heavy enough to injure the grass, be pulled over the lawn to bruise the dandelions.



Moles Discussed Next

MANY lawns are ruined by the action of moles. Their runways produce unsightly ridges in otherwise fine turf. This subject has been given exhaustive study by numerous authorities. In the summer issue of *LAWN CARE* we shall summarize their findings.

Fighting Weeds At the Source

A BULLETIN published back in 1911 by the Maryland State Experiment Station contains this very pertinent comment: "The question of pure seed is a very important one in weed control. There is scarcely any agricultural question of more vital importance than the question of good seed; none in which slighter differences can have greater influence upon the result; none in which there is greater opportunity for fraud. Nearly all our bad weeds have been introduced in seeds of various crops, especially in grass and clover seed. Weeds are being carried every year to new localities in this way. One should be on the constant look out, and no seed should be sown without a careful examination for weed seeds."

The necessity for care in buying *farm* seeds was no doubt the occasion for this word of caution from the experiment station. But in buying lawn seed the need for care is even more pressing. A farmer cultivates his ground and by so doing may rid his fields of certain weed pests. This can't very well be done with a lawn. It is allowed to get almost unendurable before being spaded up and remade. It is quite important then, not to sow weeds, the very thing that is done if light, chaffy, alluringly cheap seed is sowed. Weeds are plentiful enough without sowing them and they are easy enough to get without paying seed prices for them.

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"Never Had a Failure"

"DURING my supervision of the construction of the Leonard C. Hanna country estate at Mentor, Ohio, I had an opportunity to note the comparative results of your product with that of many other seed dealers. I am per-

fectly frank in saying that in one particular instance, where a Bent and Blue Grass mixture was used, your seed was the only successful growth I had. I have never had a failure with any seed shipped by you, to which I need not add that grass seed in most cases, as Andy says, 'is a mess.'"

E. T. HOLTSMAN,
413 Sixth Ave.,
Peoria, Ill.

Grass Growing in Dense Shade

ONE OF the worst enemies of grass is *shade*. Where that shade is caused by trees the grass has two factors operating against it. One is simply the lack of sunlight, without which most varieties of grass cannot survive. The other is the constant using of plant food by the tree roots leaving the grass what it can get. It is estimated that 40% of the roots of trees feed in the top foot of soil, that very layer from which the grass, too, must obtain its nourishment.

FOOD ESPECIALLY NEEDED.

Speaking of the difficulty of growing grass in dense shade we quote from a bulletin published by the Wisconsin State Experiment Station: "There is no question but that fertilizer would help such lawns if applied in early spring. Of course, some kinds of grass do better in shade than others." That brings us to the point—for varying degrees of shade there are appropriate grass combinations. In the average shaded lawn where the sunlight strikes the grass part of the day, our *Shade Mixture*, which contains 70% *Poa Trivialis* will produce a fine turf. Such a mixture, however, does not relieve one of the necessity for regular feeding with a complete grass fertilizer. For shady places we recommend three applications of Turf Builder (or any fer-



tilizer with a similar analysis) yearly, preferably in the months of April, June, and September. For each application 10 pounds per 1000 square feet of a 10-6-4 (Turf Builder) is the proper rate.

EXTREME SHADE.

In extreme shade where everything in the grass line has failed thus far, we have prepared what might be called a *final resort* mixture. If any grass at all will grow in everlasting darkness, this combination will hold fast. We do not list it on our price sheet but the cost is the same as that of the standard shade mixture. The necessity for frequent fertilization in such areas is most important. Give the grass all it can eat.



Ant Extermination

"I HAVE tried all kinds of things for ants on clay courts where I could get at them with Carbon Bisulphide, Gasoline, Coal Oil, Boiling Water etc. Waste of time. The simplest and best method yet is to *mix thoroughly* Tartar Emetic (poison) 1 part to ten parts of powdered sugar (fruit sugar). Sprinkle a little anywhere where the ants are working at any time when the ground is dry. Repeat for a day or two where some nests have been missed. I generally keep it in a can and just drop a pinch or two as I walk along near the ant heaps. The ants soon carry it away and don't return."

J. M. CARTIE,
173 Barrington Ave.,
Toronto, Ont., Canada.



Binders Popular

LAWN CARE binders have proven tremendously popular. More than 3500 are now in use and each mail brings many additional requests. We are distributing these binders at fifty cents

each, which is less than actual cost. At least fifty landscape architects have asked us to mail binders containing a full set of bulletins to clients of theirs who give lawn matters personal attention.

The bulletin you want may be missing when some pressing lawn problem arises. A binder enables you to keep a complete set of them intact. We aren't trying to sell you anything—but if one of our imitation leather, stiff-back, loose-leaf binders is going to help you make more practical use of LAWN CARE—you'll find that fifty cents mighty well spent. Just *ask any man that owns one.*



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 Lawn.

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

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

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 thirteen and the following lawn pests have been discussed: Plantain, Crab Grass, Dandelions, Moss, Grubs and Bettles, Chickweed, Buckhorn, Ground Ivy, Yarrow, Earthworms, Heal-all, Ants, and Speedwell.