

Lawn Care

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PUBLISHED IN FEBRUARY, MARCH, APRIL, AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER BY
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Eighth Year

Number 37

SUMMER INJURY TO TURF—Part 2

THIS discussion of the factors contributing to summer turf injury is continued from LAWN CARE No. 36.

Insect Pests

Much turf is destroyed by Chinch Bugs each summer. These small, innocent looking insects suck the juices from the stems and blades of grass. They work in colonies, starting with a small clump of grass and moving out in a circular area. They can usually be found operating in the outer edges of damaged patches. The treatment for these pests is a timely application of tobacco dust at the rate of 25 pounds per 1000 square feet. For further description of Chinch Bugs and control methods see LAWN CARE Number 50.

In addition to Chinch Bugs, the Grubworms of the Japanese and Asiatic beetles are responsible for much turf destruction each year. These pests sever the roots of turf so completely that large pieces of sod can be lifted from the ground just like a blanket. Japanese Beetles from the eastern states are extending their operations further west all the time in spite of a rigid government quarantine.

Even without the Japanese Beetles there is grub trouble enough throughout the middle western states. This comes from the grub of the ordinary May Beetle or June bug. Either type is readily controlled with Lead Arsenate. For further information about grub control, refer to LAWN CARE No. 44.

The Sod Web Worm must come in

for its share of blame. This pest can do a lot of damage after it gets started for it works fast and is difficult to control. Various insecticides are used including Lead Arsenate. See LAWN CARE Number 5 for further description and controls.

Common Cutworms can hardly be classified as serious lawn pests. When they are present in sufficient numbers to cause trouble, the damage is apt to be indirect; the sod will be badly torn by birds trying to get at the Cutworms. The presence of bird flocks feeding on a lawn may be taken as a good indication that some pests like Grubs, Web Worms or Cutworms are at work.

If Cutworms are present they can be readily brought to the surface by flooding the ground with water, then gathered and destroyed.

Another means of control is scattering poison bran mash thinly over the sod. The following formula makes an effective poisoning:

Mix 5 pounds of dry bran with $\frac{1}{4}$ pound of Paris Green. Mix separately 2 quarts water and 1 pint of cheap molasses. Then mix poisoned bran into this solution and add the juices and ground up rinds of 2 oranges or lemons.

Place the poison mash in small piles over the infested area and cover piles with boards to keep birds and pets away.

Maintenance Hints

As with all other lawn problems, summer injury would be less severe if

correct maintenance practices were followed the year around. A few of the more important practices are listed here.

Mowing. During the summer months the height of cut should be $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 inches. This will leave a longer growth of grass than is the common practice but the grass will be better able to fight off weeds, disease, insect pests and the unfavorable effect of extreme heat. A longer topgrowth means a deeper root system and greater production of food reserves in the more extensive above-ground growth. This recommendation does not apply to lawns of Creeping Bent grass. Full suggestions on the mowing program are contained in *LAWN CARE* Number 54.

Watering. Soak the ground occasionally instead of giving the lawn a daily light sprinkling. Some lawns need to be watered every day or so, others at weekly intervals. The type of soil, exposure to sunlight and weather conditions vary so much that no hard, fast rules can be offered for all lawns. See *LAWN CARE* Number 60 for complete information about watering.

Feeding. Far from the least important of maintenance hints is the matter of keeping the lawn supplied with the proper nourishment. Using the right lawn fertilizer regularly is the best insurance for a healthful, beautiful lawn the year around. Grass that is correctly fed is better able to survive heat, drouth, disease and insects, not to mention its greater weed resistance. Complete details about feeding lawns are found in Number 64 *LAWN CARE*.

Liming. We do not suggest an annual "whitewashing" of lawns as is often practiced. Some soils do need lime occasionally. This is especially true

in the eastern states. Have your soil tested at the nearest State Agricultural Experiment Station to be sure lime is needed. *LAWN CARE* bulletin Number 48 contains more facts about using lime on acid soils.

Drainage. Poor surface and subsoil drainage is the rule rather than the exception. Good drainage insures better turf the year around by providing quick removal of excess moisture, thereby assuring a supply of air for the roots. In rebuilding a lawn or making a new one the drainage should be taken care of first. In issue Number 34 *LAWN CARE* of first. A brief discussion on drainage is included in *LAWN CARE* Number 34.

Fall Repairs

Early in September each year it is reasonable to expect improvement in the weather. Shorter days with less intense sunlight as well as generally cooler weather plus gentle rains combine to help the lawn recover.

Wherever grass has not revived, preparations should be made to reseed the lawn at once. It is well to remove the dead grass by a thorough and vigorous raking. Follow with an application of Turf Builder. Then sow the grass seed and either rake or roll it in. A regular topdressing of lawns with soil is advisable providing it is possible to get soil that is free of seeds of Crabgrass and other weeds. Topdressing will not only insure better germination and seedling growth, but also helps to keep the lawn area smooth and level. Every person anxious to have a nice lawn should keep a supply of compost on hand at all times. This makes the ideal topdressing. Directions for making compost topdressing are given in *LAWN CARE* bulletin Number 3.

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