

Lawn Care

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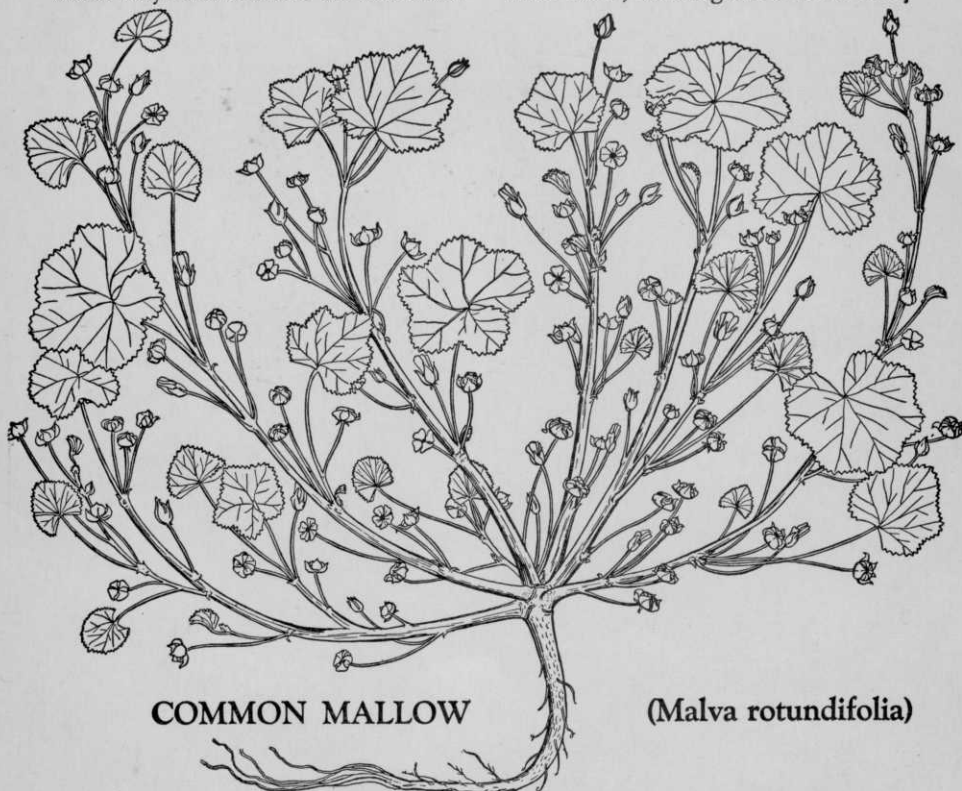
MALLOW

MALLOW is the black sheep of the interesting family of Malvaceae since it is the only serious weed in the group. Other members of the same genus are Cotton Plant, Hollyhocks and Rose of Sharon, while many more but less familiar cousins are in common use for medicinal and ornamental purposes. The Greek name Malva refers to the salve-making properties although Mal-low gives the connotation of softness which may refer either to the soft leaves

or immature plants. The long root tastes like Ginseng, apparently possessing the same medicinal virtues.

Nature of the Plant

Names often applied to Common Mallow are Roundleaf, Shirt Button Plant and Cheeses. What boy has not been dared into eating these miniature cheeses only to find no special sensation resulting? These fruits of the Mallow plant are harmless and have a somewhat sweet, mucilagenous taste. They



COMMON MALLOW

(*Malva rotundifolia*)

are called Cheeses because they resemble a ridged cheese in miniature. This formation refers to the ring of seeds which appear in the center of the pale pink flowers. The leaves are round and heart-shaped. Low-lying stems trail the ground but do not take root.

Characteristics Of Growth

Mallow is a biennial or perennial, meaning of course that it doesn't bloom the first year and that it may or may not survive beyond the second winter. It propagates solely by seeds. The plant blooms from May to October and seeds from June to November. It inhabits all of North America.

The creeping stems are sometimes 6 inches to 2 feet long and there are deep branching roots which seem to spread almost as far below the ground as the stems do above.

Newcomer In Lawns

Mallow is popularly classified as a barnyard, garden or wayside weed rather than a lawn pest yet in recent years we have received more and more specimens of it for identification.

The seeds are probably brought in for new lawn construction in topsoil or may also be invading those lawn areas which were at one time vegetable gardens. The seeds remain viable for many years when buried in the ground—an unbecoming habit of many weeds.

Means Of Control

Occasional cultivation will keep Mallow out of gardens and it may be removed from lawns by hand weeding or hoeing before the seeds are produced. Another method of eradication is by spraying the infested lawn with Iron Sulfate solution (see *LAWN CARE* Nos. 6 and 49). The plants of Mallow after being removed from a lawn should be burned to destroy the seeds.

As with other weeds, a sturdy, well fertilized turf will drive out an infestation of Mallow.

Burning Ripened Crabgrass

So far as we know there isn't any means by which Crabgrass seeds lying on the surface or buried in the soil may be completely destroyed. A street sweeper would get some of the seeds but might do compensating damage. The only effective plan in our opinion is to destroy the top growth before the seeds shatter. Where an area is largely Crabgrass the burning off stunt employed by Mr. Burke will miss some of the seeds but is reasonably satisfactory at least, unless gasless Sundays interfere!

Sirs:

I am glad to say I have your *LAWN CARE* bulletins from 1928—and have received much help from them. In one copy I read of the experience of one of your customers in fighting Crabgrass. He sprinkled gasoline on the infested section and burned the offending weed out. I was somewhat doubtful as to the effect this might have on the soil, as we wanted to reseed immediately, but as we had a bad infestation of Crabgrass decided to risk it.

There were at least fifteen spots of considerable size in the lawn where the weed had turned brown and each was treated in the same way. I sprinkled on the gasoline with a watering can having a fine spray, put the can down out of the danger zone and threw a match into the section thus sprinkled.

This area was seeded with your Seed and Turf Builder was applied, also a little peat moss raked in. This was November 1st last year. Today those spots have all filled with a fine stand of grass and the lawn looks to be in excellent condition.

I also appreciate your advice to allow the grass to remain at not less than two inches after mowing; that is, not to cut below that height. We started this last fall and are much pleased with the results. There was some trouble in obtaining the brackets to lower our roller but we finally succeeded and it was worth all the trouble.

C. B. BURKE

Plymouth Meeting, Pennsylvania.