

Lawn Care

A discussion of the vital problems of lawn making and maintenance

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Dandelion Delirium



EACH spring the first uninvited arrival in the lawn is the yellow-haired dandelion. That is our weed for discussion in this issue. There are three methods of combatting it:

1. *Hand Digging*—a sure plan but laborious on a large area. Care should be taken to kill the root by the application of a little salt or gasoline.

2. *Killing with Poison* either applied to the crown of the plant or put on with a spray. In the latter case Iron Sulphate is most commonly used. This can be obtained at almost any drug store. A solution is prepared by dissolving 2 pounds

of Iron Sulphate in a gallon of water. One gallon will spray 860 square feet. The Iron Sulphate comes in granular form and dissolves easily. Similarly a common salt solution has been successfully used. Two and a half pounds dissolved in a gallon of water makes the best solution. Even more deadly is Sulphuric Acid. This may be applied by using a sharp stick, dipping it into a bottle of Sulphuric Acid and then into the crown of the dandelion. Another killing method is to apply gasoline to the plants either by means of a long oiling can or a special dandelion killer of which there is one or more on the market.

It may be well to mention the fact that if Iron Sulphate is used in killing dandelions, care should be taken not to allow it to fall upon the cement walks as it will stain them.

3. *Fertilizing*. It is known that Ammonium Sulphate which tends to create an acid condition in the soil is not liked by dandelions yet it does not discourage Blue Grass. In fact if the Ammonium Sulphate is mixed with a complete fertilizer, the grass will even be benefited. Thus you may encourage your grass and discourage dandelions and many other weeds are similarly affected. Considering that the wind will blow dandelion seed from a great distance a constant fight must be waged to keep the plant in subjection.



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:

The formula was one and a half pounds iron sulfate (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 sulfate it was coarse and hard to dissolve. Upon investigation I found we could purchase granulated or sugar iron sulfate. This I found could be dissolved in less than half the time.

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 sulfate 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.