

Lawn Care

A discussion of the vital problems of lawn making and maintenance

PUBLISHED SEVERAL TIMES YEARLY BY

O. M. SCOTT & SONS COMPANY - SEEDSMEN - MARYSVILLE, OHIO

Vol. III

September 1930

No. 5

ANTS

How to Rid Your Lawn of Them

A SEASON when the weather has been so unfavorable to the growth of grass appears to have been chosen by ANTS as an ideal time for their wholesale appearance. Letters by the scores have come into our office asking how ants might be most successfully relieved of "life and the pursuit of happiness."

The remedies herein described are not our own discoveries but the accepted extermination methods recommended by experiment stations and the vast army of golf course green keepers who have thousands of acres of fine turf under their watchful care. The burrows of ants may be fumigated or a poisoned bait used to feed them.

Carbon bisulphide and calcium cyanide are the two most generally used fumigants. If the burrows are so numerous as to form a mound it is suggested by one authority that holes be made in the mound about a foot apart by driving a stake an inch in diameter to a depth of ten or twelve inches. About one-fourth pint of carbon bisulphide is then poured into each hole and the opening plugged with soil. The entire mound should then be covered with a piece of old carpet or

burlap for twenty-four hours to prevent escape of the gas formed by the chemical.

Where the ants are not so numerous that they have formed mounds, carbon bisulphide may be injected into the openings by employing a mechanic's spring bottom oil can. About a teaspoonful of the fumigant should be squirted into each opening. The openings should be plugged with soil after the treatment so the fumes will be kept in.

Instead of carbon bisulphide one may use calcium cyanide provided the openings of the ant nests are enlarged. One teaspoonful should be used for each burrow. Care should be taken not to spill these chemicals over other lawn areas than those being treated. Injury to plants may result if the material comes in contact with the roots. Carbon bisulphide is both poisonous and inflammable and should be handled as such.

The poisonous bait idea may also be employed in the war on ants. This is the so-called government formula:

1. Dissolve 2 pounds (1000 grams) of sugar in $2\frac{1}{2}$ gills of water, add $\frac{1}{10}$ ounce (3 grams) of tartaric acid (crystals) boil for thirty minutes and cool.

2. Dissolve $\frac{1}{10}$ ounce (3 grams) of sodium arsenate in 4 teaspoonfuls (20 c.c.) of hot water. Cool and add $3\frac{1}{3}$ ounces (100 grams) of honey.

Mix the two solutions together thoroughly. Small pieces of sponge, cotton



or wadded paper should then be saturated with the poison syrup and distributed where the ants work.

A more satisfactory plan, however, is to place the poison to the depth of a half inch in small covered cans, in the sides of which holes have been punched from the inside out with a ten-penny nail, about an inch from the bottom. A piece of sponge, cotton or paper placed in the can will prevent the ants from drowning in the syrup. This poison is not strong enough to kill the ants immediately but they will carry it away to the nests and feed it to the queen and the young, thus destroying the entire colony.

This and the other treatments suggested will be found most successful during warm, sunny weather when the ants are most active.

It is interesting to know how ants injure grass. The galleries which they form in the soil disturb plant roots and the earthen mounds which they build cover low growing plants. Some species carry away germinating seeds and still others are indirectly injurious because they protect certain plant pests such as bugs and insects. Ants' nests make very unsightly spots in lawns. It is useless to resow such spots with seed until the ants have been killed. These areas should then be raked thoroughly, new soil scattered over them, the ground fertilized and re-seeded.

Two simple treatments which are sometimes successful involve the use of coal oil and Paris green.

Coal oil cannot be used on the lawn as it will kill the grass. However, in drives or other places without vegetation, a little coal oil poured into the holes will usually kill the ant colony.

Paris green mixed in equal proportions with brown sugar will often destroy a colony as the ants will carry the poison to their nests and feed it to the young.

As in the treatment of all lawn pests, we shall be glad to have the comments and experiences of any who have used various ant killing remedies and formed some opinion on the subject. There are, of course, some commercial remedies on the market, obtainable usually in drug stores.



Gardener Reads Lawn Care

F. V. Du Pont, Esq., Wilmington, Delaware, wrote us August 18th as follows: "Enclosed please find 50c in stamps for which kindly send one binder for *LAWN CARE* to Mr. Mark Patton, Cecil-town, Maryland." Incidentally, Mr. Patton is head gardener at the Du Pont Estate, which may give someone else an idea.



More About Earthworms

"YOU ASKED for contributions of experience on exterminating earthworms. We have had our trouble with earthworms for years in our lawn. We are located on a hill under a heavy oak shade and we have found that Mowrah Meal gives best results."—W. E. SHARP, Chicago, Ill.

Thank you, Mr. Sharp, for giving us the benefit of your experience.

In *LAWN CARE* for June-July, where-in earthworms were featured, we intentionally omitted the Mowrah Meal remedy because we felt the other "killers" were more easily obtainable. However, to make the worm story complete we add this paragraph:

Mowrah Meal consists of the ground seeds of the madhuca tree of the East Indies. The oil in the seeds is first pressed out. When fresh this meal is a very effective worm killer and may be applied to the grass in a dry condition at the rate of 15 pounds per 1000 square feet. The



grass should then be freely watered. Mowrah Meal deteriorates with age especially when stored in a damp place. In such condition it is ineffective. It has the advantage of being comparatively harmless to man and for this reason many people prefer it to poisonous killers.



THANKS, ADMIRAL.

"Please accept my thanks for LAWN CARE. It is a valuable aid to those struggling to keep up their lawns."—REAR ADMIRAL C. L. HUSSEY, Litchfield, Conn.



Fall Seeding Best
Hundred Years Ago

THE UNITED STATES GOLF ASSOCIATION maintains a Green Section at Washington from which much valuable information on grass culture emanates. We are indebted to a bulletin from that source for the information we are about to impart. Back in the year 1818 a learned professor in London, England published a book entitled "An Essay on Agriculture." This gentleman, Dr. William Richardson, set forth in his book the same reasons for fall sowing of seed which our own authorities advocate today. The species of grass under discussion by the Doctor was Bent, known then and still called in Europe today, Fiorin Grass.

The discovery which Doctor Richardson made prior to 1818 has still not been made by many of the largest users of seed today. We imagine more seed is still sowed in the spring than in fall yet there is a constant swing toward the latter. More than a hundred years ago Dr. Richardson made this observation:

"I have often been asked what is the best season for laying down fiorin. Here, as in many other parts of his business,

the farmer has not always an option; he must do several things when he can, though it be not the most desirable time: to determine that, we must speculate a little *a priori*, and consider what difficulties our favourite has to encounter in its progress, that we may contrive to avoid them, none from seasons, for this hardy grass vegetates at all seasons; the roots equally, and the stolons tolerably; at the worst, that is, in the middle of winter, *the only difficulty to be dreaded is the rush of intruding weeds and grasses.*

"The best possible season must therefore be that, when this host of enemies is able to do the least mischief, which I find is from the 8th of September to the 25th; for in this interval the efforts of vegetation are strong, and both fiorin and its rivals come forward vigorously; but the latter are soon destroyed by the winter frosts, to which the fiorin is quite insensible, and remains torpid, or rather languid, until it is with all other vegetables roused by the genial spring, and in its vigorous progress finds no rivals to encounter but those which are just beginning to vegetate—of course diminutive and weak.

"Had we commenced earlier, the intruders would have time to acquire strength to sustain the frost, and the contest between them and the fiorin would have been carried on on equal terms."

Like Æsop, Dr. Richardson made an observation which is equally true today.



Binders

THE BINDERS for LAWN CARE are now ready. Several hundred have been sent out. The fifty-cent pieces, stamps, checks, and money orders have poured in daily. Some of our friends have been thoughtful enough to suggest ways to make this little container of

LAWN CARE bulletins more useful. One was to reprint our booklet "LAWNS" in bulletin form so it could be enclosed in the binder. Another was to include a sheet listing our various products and quoting prices. Both are excellent suggestions and will doubtless be used. It is our belief that in the course of another year or two those who assemble in this convenient binder all the lawn helps that are received will be able to diagnose any turf ailment and prescribe the most effective remedy. Landscape architects and gardeners are saying nice things about LAWN CARE, which goes to show that even the best cooks use a cook book.

Heal-All and Crab Grass

MR. ALBERT A. FAULK, of 425 W. North Shore Drive, South Bend Indiana, has sent us a sample of heal-all and makes this comment:

"I find that sulfate of ammonia kills this very readily. As for crab grass I find that by raking this grass thoroughly with a dandelion rake, then cutting with the mower set low, I have gotten rid of at least two-thirds of the crab grass. This is the third year I have tried this plan and it works better than any other that I have found."

Another D'lion Cure

HERE IS another treatment for dandelions that I have been using this summer. Get a long spouted oil can and fill it with gasoline. Put four or five drops on the leaves of the dandelion so that it runs down into the crown of the plant. In two or three days the leaves turn brown and wither up. After a while the plant sends up new leaves which have to be treated again, but the process is better than cutting and much quicker and easier."—J. B. GIBBS, 338 Ormond Ave., Sharon, Pa.

What Next?

The next issue of LAWN CARE will be published and distributed in February, 1931. The pest to be featured in that issue will be the one about which there are the most requests for information during the next three months. If you are being bothered by some troublesome weed or lawn pest which LAWN CARE has not previously mentioned, please write us about it. Each will be featured in the order of its *unpopularity*.

—❖—
WE HOPE SO, TOO.

"I have had many strangers call to see my lawn and I am proud to show it. Hope it will make new Scott customers."
—M. E. SHOREY, 4357 W. 25th St., Chicago, Ill.

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