

Lawn Care

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Chinch Bugs Attack Turf

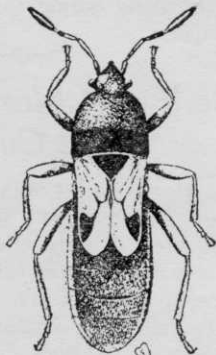
THE Chinch Bug, notorious in the south for its damaging attacks upon St. Augustine grass, has been active in many of the northern states during the past few months. The last important rampage of the Chinch Bug was in 1925. Grain yields were greatly reduced that year as a result of the activity of this pest and during the recent summer, as if a self-appointed member of the government's crop reduction commission this insect made great inroads into grain production through the middle west. While it is less common for the Chinch Bug to attack grass, we have had numerous reports of lawns being badly spotted with brown areas from this cause.

CHINCH BUGS UNSUSPECTED.

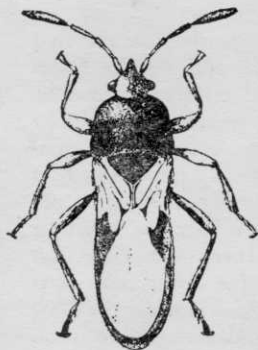
Much of the brown, dead looking turf which followed the high temperatures of early summer was attributed to scald. There was considerable moisture in the ground as well as sap in the grass blades when Sol "turned on." It was to be expected that grass would suffer. This

burning of lawns as a result of weather conditions served as a smoke screen to conceal the activities of worms and insects. The army worm and web worm have been active in some sections and the Japanese Beetle has put in its usual licks in New Jersey and western Pennsylvania. The Chinch Bug has been heard from in the New England states and we have examined specimens of turf from northern Ohio where the grass blades showed the effects of having had the life sapped

out of them. Some of the live bugs were still present in one grass specimen when it was received.



Short-winged form



Long-winged form

TWO FORMS OF CHINCH BUGS.

As the illustration shows there are two forms of these bugs but no difference in their methods of attack. One is the short-winged type which has been found to operate principally along the seacoast and in the east extends inland along the lower Great Lakes to northern Illinois. This is the type which is believed most frequently to attack grass. The long-winged species of Chinch Bug is found

over most of the country between the Rocky Mountains and Allegheny Mountains. Both forms have black bodies with whitish wings, each having a black spot in the center. The young have no wings and are reddish in color. The body of the adult insect is about one-fifth of an inch or less in length. An easy way to distinguish the Chinch Bug is by its disagreeable "buggy" odor.

METHOD OF ATTACK.

The Chinch Bug implants itself under the laterals of the close fitting blades of grass. In its feeding it imparts a reddish stain to the blades attacked and causes the death of the cells. Grass on an infested lawn turns brown in patches and if not promptly treated may die. Around the dead brown spots will be a circle of grass which has turned yellow. It is in this circle rather than in the dead center that the bugs are working.

CONTROL.

Like all true bugs the Chinch Bug does its damage by sucking the juices from the plant and therefore cannot be killed by stomach poisons but only by contact insecticides. A satisfactory control dust is finely ground tobacco such as Snuff No. 2 analyzing about two per cent Nicotine. This is harmless to handle and in sections where obtainable can usually be bought for about four cents per pound. Twenty-five pounds per 1000 square feet will provide good control. Tobacco dust should be applied on a dry sunny day and it is well not to sprinkle the lawn for several days after application. A three per cent Nicotine Sulfate-lime dust, when used at the rate of 7 pounds per 1,000 square feet is also effective. This can be purchased already made at about 20 cents per pound or can be made at home at a substantial saving by thoroughly mixing $3\frac{3}{4}$ pounds of 40% Nicotine Sulfate with 50 pounds of hydrated lime.

One of the most easily procurable controls is Nicotine Sulfate (Black Leaf 40). The recommended solution is one pint of Nicotine Sulfate to 100 gallons of water. To make the material spread better five or six pounds of laundry soap or a quart of skim milk may be added to the water. This solution should be applied to the affected turf in sufficient quantities to drench it thoroughly. It is said that spraying solution made from pyrethrum compounds may give even a better kill than the nicotine solutions.

PREVENTION.

As in the case of all plant life, a strong sturdy growth of grass is less apt to succumb to Chinch Bug injury than weak underfed grass. A lawn that is well fertilized and watered correctly during dry seasons will be able to hold its own against most insect pests. Close mowing should be avoided during dry weather, particularly during an attack of Chinch Bugs.



Sodium Chlorate is Not Common Salt

DURING the past few weeks a number of persons have written us to the effect that they had asked the drug stores for Sodium Chlorate to try out one of the weed killing suggestions and were told that it was simply common table salt. We sincerely trust that no one who had used Sodium Chlorate in weed control has used any surplus in the salt shaker. The difference is in the words *Chlorate* and *Chloride*. Sodium Chlorate is a poison used successfully in the destroying of many of our worst pests. Lawn weeds that succumb to it are Poison Ivy, Speedwell, Quack Grass; on the farm, Canada Thistle, Wild Morning Glory, Iron Weed, and Burdock.