

Lawn Care

REG. U. S. PAT. OFF.

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HENBIT

WE ARE introducing here a weed which hardly gets its share of slander because too few people know it by name. While not as common as many of the familiar garden pests, Henbit bobs up frequently in nearly every section of the country. Many specimens are sent in for identification each year.

With Eurasia lies the responsibility for introducing this weed into America. The origin of its name is more obscure. We can find no clue of association with poultry such as Quack Grass boasts. It is probably better known as Blind Nettle, Dead Nettle, or Bee Nettle, and is a frequent visitor in lawns, gardens and waste places, especially where the soil is rich and damp.

In full growth the stems are six to eight inches long. They seldom exceed the smaller length in lawns where growth is retarded by mowing and the competition of other vegetation. The branching from its lower base and lower axils is a characteristic that aids in identification. Like other members of the mint family, the stems of Henbit are four-sided or somewhat square in

shape. This simplifies identification.

The rounded, deeply scalloped leaves are sparsely hairy and arrange themselves on opposite sides of the stems. Near the base of the plant they have short leaf-stems but the upper ones are tightly clasping. The small red or purplish flowers grow in clusters at both the terminals and where the leaves join the stems. Their nectar frequently attracts honey bees, a fact which accounts for the name of Bee Nettle.



HENBIT
(*Lamium amplexicaule*)

Henbit flourishes best in cool weather, developing seeds in early spring. With the heat of summer it usually dies down but revives with the advent of cool fall temperatures and immediately proceeds to infest the soil with a second abundant sowing of seed. These seeds produce the plants that appear the following spring. Suitable weather conditions or some slight disturbance such as raking may start the germination of seeds which have lain dormant but nevertheless viable for many years.

Means of Control

Hand pulling before the bloom periods of early spring and autumn is

the most effective means of ridding a lawn of this pest. Close mowing as in the case of most annuals will prevent seed production and eventually clear the soil of previously deposited seeds. Where clover is not considered objectionable, a heavy seeding of it will often smother out a flourishing patch of Henbit.

Rector's Cat Proves Good Mole Destroyer

We received recently from Rev. Sylvester P. Robertson of St. Andrews Episcopal Church, Aberdeen, Washington, the following letter:

"I am the user of your lawn seed in a small way and my friends are surprised when they visit me for the first time and see my lawn.

"I have religiously read your **LAWN CARE** for the past six years and this, as well as your excellent seed, has much to do with the fine appearance of my turf.

"But what prompts me to write to you at this time, is the fact that yesterday I lost the best mole destroyer ever invented—our old tabby cat "Calico." This cat and a kitten of hers have kept my once badly mole-infested lawn free from them for over three years. The two cats together have caught and brought to the doorstep literally dozens of moles. They long since rid my lawn of the pests and for the last two years have been bringing them in from the adjacent wild lawns. But a passing automobile struck and killed old Calico. I have never seen cats mentioned as mole eradicators and thought you and your readers might be interested."

Home-Made Weed Killer

"I want to thank you for the papers on **LAWN CARE** and I notice some articles on ridding lawns of Dandelion and Buckhorn so I will explain how I rid my lawn of these pesky things.

"I took a piece of $\frac{3}{8}$ inch galvanized pipe about 30 inches long and threaded both ends and placed a regular pipe cap on each end. Drill a small hole in pipe near one end as a vent, in the other pipe cap drill a hole to fit the stem of an old inner tube, place a small gasket on top and bottom of cap and screw down with the regular nuts found on inner tubes. Grind off about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch of the end of valve stem in order to let the small needle air release stem extend out of end of valve stem, and then fill the pipe with gasoline and it is ready for action. It is an easy way to walk over your lawn using this instrument as a cane and every time it is placed on the top of the plant with just a slight touch the valve releases just a drop or if more pressure and time it will release a quantity of gasoline into the hearts of the weeds. In a day or two, examine the plants treated and I have found very stubborn Buckhorn Plantain roots that were down in the ground six or eight inches on the third day black and decayed."—Chas. C. Dawson, Coshoc-ton, Ohio.

Don't Forget

that **LAWN CARE** is published five times yearly, in February, March, April, August and September. Some folks write that a bulletin has been missed but usually it is because the months of issue have been forgotten.



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