

Lawn Care

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TO LOVERS OF BEAUTIFUL TURF

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FOXTAIL

Also called Pigeon Grass, Pussy Grass and Bottle Grass.

Annual—propagates by seeds.

Blooms from July to September.

Seeds from August to October.

At home all over the world and in all types of soil.

Waves of popularity or at least prominence even invade the weed family. Foxtail, for example, has had a conspicuous year. Many specimens have been received for identification and we have inspected much turf this summer where Foxtail has been in evidence. There are at least three different members of this family although two, Yellow Foxtail (*Setaria glauca*) and Green Foxtail (*Setaria viridis*) are the most familiar. The latter is more frequently found in lawns and other turf areas. There is such marked similarity

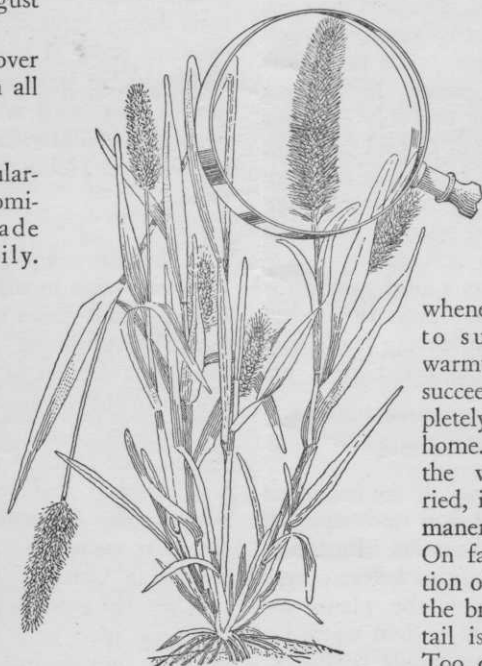
between the two that we shall not attempt to draw any fine lines of distinction but refer simply to the family name, Foxtail.

Origin.

Foxtail is another weed for which Europe gets the blame. It apparently came over with the early settlers as an impurity in clover seed and grain. Once in the soil it retains its vitality for years, springing up whenever brought near to surface light and warmth. No weed has succeeded in more completely making itself at home. In every part of the world where carried, it has become permanently established. On farms in every section of the United States the bristly head of Foxtail is a familiar sight. Too often it has come into town to establish itself in lawns.

Distinguishing Features.

The stems branch from the base, growing from fibrous, clustered roots, usually about a foot tall although when



started late and cut frequently, Foxtail has been known to mature seed when only three inches high. The sheaths (tubular envelopes which form the lower base of grasses) are loose, compressed and often tinged with red at the bottom. The blades are three to six inches long and nearly a half inch wide, flat, smooth, and hanging with a twist. The spikes (seed heads) are two to four inches long. Extending outward and upward from tightly clustered seeds are greenish, yellow bristles as indicated in the illustration.

Hot Weather Weed.

Like Crab Grass, Foxtail is distinctly a hot weather weed. The seed does not germinate until early summer when the ground is warm, while the plants make their real growth in extreme temperatures. That probably accounts for the prominence of Foxtail this year. In addition, it was favored in many locations by the absence of any real competition from good grasses. This was particularly true in new seedings where the grass did not get a good start in the spring. The seedling grass succumbed to the extreme heat leaving many bare places where Foxtail could grow unhampered.

Means of Control.

As with other annuals the important thing is to prevent seed from ripening and re-infesting the lawn. Foxtail is easily recognized. Even before a seed head has developed, the plants are more conspicuous than most weeds belonging to the grass family because of the wide and rather stubby blades. A heavy growth of ripe Foxtail may be burned off but where scattered thinly in turf, the mowing off and removing of the ripened plants will prevent a new growth from the same source the following year.

Advantages of Fall Seeding Are Reported

IN AUGUST "Lawn Care" an invitation was extended to any who had observed fall seeding advantages, to report them. The first to respond were the following:

"I can testify to the advantages of seeding a lawn in the fall. In the spring of 1935 we sowed lawn seed and it came up beautifully, but later, during the rainy season, we found the lawn difficult to mow. The reason was Crab Grass. We spent long days in digging it out and finally had the ground ready for resowing. This was done during September and we had an excellent stand of grass before winter. This year, in spite of the drouth, we have a nice lawn with practically no Crab Grass."—Mrs. Caroline M. Beachler, 64 West Home Street, Westerville, Ohio.

* * *

"I thought you would like to hear of my observation in connection with the subject of fall versus spring seeding. A local WPA project of clearing and grading a section of a cemetery was started in the vicinity of my home last March. In April one section was seeded, then another in May. The work was dropped and resumed again in August. By September 15th a third area was seeded and the final, fourth section in October. The soil preparation was the same in each instance and the very same seed was used. There are now four distinct plots with a different growth of grass on each. The spring seedings are thin and show considerable weed growth while the fall seedings show a much heavier turf, a healthier color and fewer weeds by a wide margin."—Edward F. Moran, 45 Franklin St., Fall River, Mass.

Layman Reports on State of His Lawn

AMONG our thousands of customers we note occasionally one who, by reason of making a constant study of lawn maintenance practices, would qualify for a place on the directorate of Lawn Experts, Incorporated (if one existed). Such a lawn addict is Everett L. Williams, 220 East Franklin Street, Sparta, Wisconsin, who on June 9th of this year wrote to us as follows:

"I wish to thank you for putting me wise to mowing my lawn at a height of 1½ inches and leaving the clippings lie. Boy! this works—gives the lawn a richer, deeper color and if mowing is done at least twice a week as I do, and the mower is kept sharp like a razor the grass will look as if it were shaved.

"I used to take all the clippings off, fertilize and top dress three times a year, cut at a height of ¾ inch. Grass clippings are the best top dressing you can find if the lawn is kept mowed at least twice a week.

"I do not like June feeding especially if the clippings have been allowed to lie, because with the heavy dews and hot sun, fungus diseases are encouraged. On a well kept lawn if the height of the grass is kept at 1½ inches, clippings are allowed to remain, mowing is done two or three times a week, a good early fall feeding is sufficient.

"Here is the low down on burlap. It is the best stuff known to put over seed bed after sowing to prevent washing and to start germination. It should be taken off just as soon as grass comes up through. If burlap is left on, mildew starts. It cuts off too much air. If dry whipping winds start or a heavy rain is in sight, burlap should be put back on and removed after wind subsides and rainfall is over. If burlap is allowed to remain on too long the young grass will

pass out in patches. After grass gets up 1½ to 2 inches no wash will occur.

"If you have not seen them, I wish to call your attention to the slickest little lawn rake on the market. It is light as a feather, will pick up everything like a vacuum. It should be handled like a broom. This little rake has everything skinned for raising up the runners of bent grass. The teeth are flexible, made out of carbon steel and are flat, set ¼ inch apart. It is called "Kleen Sweep" No. 41 and is made by Rugg Manufacturing Company, Greenfield, Mass. This rake is kind to the turf and will not tear up or injure the little grass rootlets.

"This is a wonderful year thus far with us. Best grass we have had for 30 years. Lawns are simply wonderful.."

* * *

To illustrate the devious ways of Nature, the ideal weather of spring which prompted the above outburst of enthusiasm by Mr. Williams in May, gave way to a scorching summer and on August 17th we wrote to ask him if he could still stand by his earlier statement. Here is his reply:

"Lawns in this locality took the worst burning in history this summer. They are all white now. How much my own lawn is damaged I cannot yet tell—the ground is as hard as pavement. I believe, however, that my summer maintenance program, especially the high cutting, will save the day. With some good fall rains I believe my lawn will come back with a bang."

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Thank you for your bulletin of August in this morning's mail. It may be interesting to you to know that I have practically eradicated crab grass from my lawn in four years through cutting it out by hand. It was an awful job the first year, but there is not over 10 per cent now compared with the amount in 1933. I am interested in the blow torch plan suggested in this bulletin. It is pretty heroic treatment but might work.—LEWIS O. ATHERTON, Jackson Community Chest, Inc., Jackson, Mich.

Heal-All Succumbs After Iron Sulphate Applied

"I would like to report my success on a piece of lawn that was infested with Heal-All to the extent that there was little and in places, almost no grass. We sprayed it three times with a solution of iron sulfate last year. Then last fall gave it a hearty meal of your Turf Builder and we have a very good stand of grass there this spring. As soon as the snow went off that piece of lawn looked green, while the rest of the lawn was more or less brown. I plan to treat the entire lawn wherever there is any trace of Heal-all this summer, then next fall give it Turf Builder.

"I find the iron sulfate kills some of the coarser grasses but there are some others it does not bother."—Mrs. J. H. Reno, Macomb, Ill.

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."

Scott Publications

This issue of "Lawn Care" is one of a series of such bulletins published five times each year. Subscriptions are free to anyone interested. In addition you can obtain several other Scott publications on lawns, including the following:

Lawns—The amateur gardener's guide to better lawns. Condensed but very complete information on soils, fertilizing and seeding. Free.

Bent Lawns—A practical discussion of the most beautiful of all lawn grasses. Tells how to plant with either seed or stolons. Several natural color illustrations. Free.

Lawn Care—In previous numbers the following lawn problems have been discussed:

- 1928—Dandelions.
- 1929—Moss, Grubs and Beetles, Chickweed, Buckhorn.
- 1930—Ground Ivy, Yarrow, Earthworms, Heal-all, Ants.
- 1931—Speedwell, Creeping Buttercup, Moles, Knot Grass.
- 1932—Sheep Sorrel, Quack Grass, Spurge, Trefoil, Goose Grass.
- 1933—Nimble Will, Knawel, Terraces, Shepherd's Purse, Chinch Bugs.
- 1934—Sedge, Shade, Purslane.
- 1935—Peppergrass, Shade, Crab Grass, Summer Injury to Turf.
- 1936—White Clover in Lawns, Poa Annu, Fall Seeding.

For 50c an attractive stiff-back binder containing all issues, will be supplied.