

Lawn Care

REG. U.S. PAT. OFF.

PUBLISHED IN FEBRUARY, MARCH, APRIL, AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER BY
O. M. SCOTT & SONS CO., MARYSVILLE, OHIO

September 1941

FOURTEENTH YEAR

Number 67

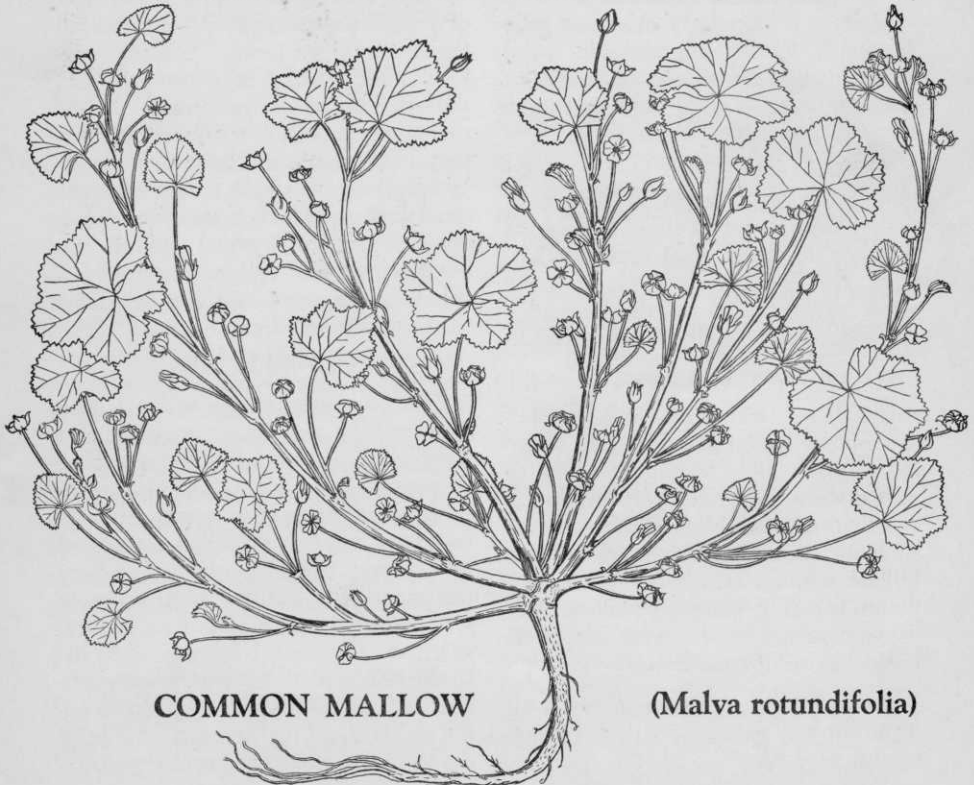
MALLOW

MALLOW is the black sheep of the interesting family of Malvaceae since it is the only serious weed in the group. Other members of the same genus are Cotton Plant, Hollyhocks and Rose of Sharon, while many more but less familiar cousins are in common use for medicinal and ornamental purposes. The Greek name Malva refers to the salve-making properties although Mallo gives the connotation of softness which may refer either to the soft leaves

or immature plants. The long root tastes like Ginseng, apparently possessing the same medicinal virtues.

Nature of the Plant

Names often applied to Common Mallow are Roundleaf, Shirt Button Plant and Cheeses. What boy has not been dared into eating these miniature cheeses only to find no special sensation resulting? These fruits of the Mallow plant are harmless and have a somewhat sweet, mucilagenous taste. The y



COMMON MALLOW

(*Malva rotundifolia*)

are called Cheeses because they resemble a ridged cheese in miniature. This formation refers to the ring of seeds which appear in the center of the pale pink flowers. The leaves are round and heart-shaped. Low-lying stems trail the ground but do not take root.

Characteristics Of Growth

Mallow is a biennial or perennial, meaning of course that it doesn't bloom the first year and that it may or may not survive beyond the second winter. It propagates solely by seeds. The plant blooms from May to October and seeds from June to November. It inhabits all of North America.

The creeping stems are sometimes 6 inches to 2 feet long and there are deep branching roots which seem to spread almost as far below the ground as the stems do above.

Newcomer In Lawns

Mallow is popularly classified as a barnyard, garden or wayside weed rather than a lawn pest yet in recent years we have received more and more specimens of it for identification.

The seeds are probably brought in for new lawn construction in topsoil or may also be invading those lawn areas which were at one time vegetable gardens. The seeds remain viable for many years when buried in the ground—an unbecoming habit of many weeds.

Means Of Control

Occasional cultivation will keep Mallow out of gardens and it may be removed from lawns by hand weeding or hoeing before the seeds are produced. Another method of eradication is by spraying the infested lawn with Iron Sulfate solution (see *LAWN CARE* Nos. 6 and 49). The plants of Mallow after being removed from a lawn should be burned to destroy the seeds.

As with other weeds, a sturdy, well fertilized turf will drive out an infestation of Mallow.

Spiking Benefits Turf

"Grass roots need fresh air just as human beings do!" Such was a recent expression by Prof. L. D. Baver, Soil Physicist of the North Carolina State College of Agriculture. That is one important reason why successful gardening requires regular cultivation. Lawns are gardens of grass but seldom treated as such. We expect lawns to produce a dense crop of grass year after year but a serious handicap is that they cannot be cultivated by stirring up the soil.

The only practical way to cultivate the soil around grass roots is to use a spiked roller, spike disk, a tamp with spikes in the base or a hollow tined fork. Even though the use of such tools temporarily mars the appearance of the lawn, the grass will soon recover and show distinct gains.

While spiking helps turf at any time of year, it seems to fit best into the fall rejuvenating program. Spiking perforates the surface of a compact soil, thus permitting air to circulate in the root zone. Beneficial soil bacteria which may have been suffocating will be revived. These will start to work on the dead grass roots which are always present as a product of active growth. Important nutrients will also be released as the discarded roots and other vegetable matter in the soil decay.

Puts Food In Pantry

The punctures in the soil resulting from spiking also permit moisture and fertilizer to penetrate into the root zone or pantry of the lawn. The texture or physical condition of an extremely compact lawn soil may actually be modified and improved by following a spiking treatment with a light topdressing of screened soil containing organic matter, sharp sand and other soil amendments. In this way a material of more favorable texture may be blended into the existing soil without the necessity of tearing out the lawn completely and remaking.

To spike a lawn effectively, the soil should be moist and soft but not soggy. If the ground is soft the spikes will penetrate to a maximum depth and that is desirable. If the spikes refuse to sink into the soil, then the ground is too dry and the use of a spiker is apt to do the grass more harm than good. Park superintendents and golf course greenkeepers have long recognized the benefits of spiking turf occasionally. Consequently various spiking tools are usually to be found in their supply rooms. Several light weight spiking tools for home use are now on the market. A list of suppliers can be furnished upon request.

Burns Ripened Crabgrass With Gasoline

Never a summer passes that we do not receive hundreds of questions about Crabgrass. A Gallup poll would certainly show that 77% of all lawn owners have it! The variety of names, both pet and profane, which this pest has been called, would fill a book.

So far as we know there isn't any means by which Crabgrass seeds lying on the surface or buried in the soil may be completely destroyed. Such methods as picking them up with a vacuum cleaner have been suggested but could hardly be considered practical on a large area. A street sweeper would get some of the seeds but might do compensating damage. The only effective plan in our opinion is to destroy the top growth before the seeds shatter. Where an area is largely Crabgrass the burning off stunt employed by Mr. Burke will miss some of the seeds but is reasonably satisfactory at least, unless gasless Sundays interfere!

Sirs:

I am glad to say I have your LAWN CARE bulletins from 1928—and have received much help from them. In one copy I read of the experience of one of your customers in fighting Crabgrass. He sprinkled gasoline on the

infested section and burned the offending weed out. I was somewhat doubtful as to the effect this might have on the soil, as we wanted to reseed immediately, but as we had a bad infestation of Crabgrass decided to risk it.

There were at least fifteen spots of considerable size in the lawn where the weed had turned brown and each was treated in the same way. I sprinkled on the gasoline with a watering can having a fine spray, put the can down out of the danger zone and threw a match into the section thus sprinkled.

This area was seeded with your Seed and Turf Builder was applied, also a little peat moss raked in. This was November 1st last year. Today those spots have all filled with a fine stand of grass and the lawn looks to be in excellent condition.

I also appreciate your advice to allow the grass to remain at not less than two inches after mowing; that is, not to cut below that height. We started this last fall and are much pleased with the results. There was some trouble in obtaining the brackets to lower our roller but we finally succeeded and it was worth all the trouble.

C. B. BURKE

Plymouth Meeting, Pennsylvania.

Massachusetts Tackles Weed Problem

The wind-borne pollen of Rag Weed causes misery each year to millions of hay fever sufferers. The Federation of Women's Clubs, Garden Clubs and the New England Wild Flower Preservation Society joined forces to do something about it as far as the Bay State was concerned. The State Department of Health co-operated. While this weed is seldom if ever found in lawns we suggest the prescribed methods of control here so those who have both lawns and hay fever may not be compelled to neglect one for the other.

Ragweed is an annual reproduced each year by seeds of the previous season. The long greenish spike of this fernlike weed carries literally billions of pollen grains on each stem. Many localities have carried on vigorous campaigns to remove this asthma producer from gardens, roadsides and vacant lots. Hay fever has no respect for age, sex or

race—and it cares not whether you are slim or stout, calm or nervous, robust or run-down, Republican or Democrat. Thus any campaign to lessen the spread of Ragweed has a universal appeal.

Mrs. Wesley C. Ahlgren of Brocton, Massachusetts, who has participated actively in this crusade, reports that Boy and Girl Scout organizations have been called upon to provide hand power. A bounty has been put on the weed and youngsters who help destroy the plants are paid by various organizations for their labors. Here is the summary of control methods suggested: Pull plants by the roots before they reach the pollen stage. Cut with a mower, sickle or scythe. Spray with a weed killer such as Sodium Chlorate (1 pound to a gallon of water). Burn Ragweed which has gone to seed.

This impresses us as being a worthwhile undertaking and may be a suggestion garden clubs in other states might inaugurate. Incidentally weeds allowed to grow in vacant lots are also troublesome for all lawn makers in the vicinity, so while Ragweed is being pulled out one might also stoop to remove other pests.

If You Haven't a Binder

This binder of **LAWN CARE** bulletins has not been a Book of the Month selection but in thousands of homes it has precedence over best sellers. It may be found in more than 50,000 homes, public libraries, reception rooms of professional men such as physicians, dentists, architects; and on the desks of garden editors and landscape architects.

LAWN CARE Binders are given as Christmas, anniversary and birthday gifts; sent to hosts or hostesses in appre-

ciation of a pleasant week-end; to good life insurance prospects and business associates; to bridge acquaintances following an evening where the conversation turned from cards to lawns; to



prospective grooms whose brides-to-be wanted to make sure that the new home had a nice lawn; and even to neighbors as a gentle reminder that weeds can spread if left unmolested. Greenkeepers and green chairmen of golf clubs would not be without **LAWN CARE** nor would superintendents of school grounds, parks and cemeteries.

A good turf enthusiast wrote the other day, "I never bought such a dollar's worth as when I sent for your **LAWN CARE** Binder." The binders now contain 67 bulletins plus *Good Lawns* and a reference index. Along with them goes a free subscription to future issues and there is additional capacity for at least five more years. The price of a complete **LAWN CARE** Binder is \$1 postage paid (a few cents less than our actual cost). The same series paper bound is 25c.

O. M. SCOTT & SONS CO.



MARYSVILLE • • OHIO

EVERY PACKAGE OF SCOTT'S LAWN SEED BEARS THIS TRADE-MARK AND IS SEALED FOR YOUR PROTECTION