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# A PATCH of GREEN

Official Publication of the  
Michigan & Border Cities Golf Course Superintendents Association



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# A New Handle on the Ataenius Spretulus Grub Problem

by Gerald S. Wegner  
Graduate Research Associate  
Department of Entomology  
O.A.R.D.C. & the Ohio State Univ.

After two years of intensive research on the biology and control of *Ataenius spretulus*, Dr. Harry Niemczyk and myself feel very strongly that we have a handle on this serious white grub problem of golf course greens and fairways. The solution is quite simple. Since the small black beetle and its immature stages are not always apparent or easily monitored by direct observation, it is now possible to "predict" what stage of *Ataenius* development or life history is occurring at a given time of the year by means of concurrent natural events (i.e., the blooming of certain common flowering plants, shrubs, or trees). This method is valid because both insect and plant biology is dominated by two factors in common: 1) length of daylight and 2) seasonal changes in temperature. Therefore, the activity of the various insects and plants will follow a set pattern year after year.

I have found that the first major flights of overwintered *Ataenius* adults and their initial appearance in and on greens and fairways correspond to the

first noticeable blossoming of dandelion, common blue violet, cultivated magnolia, black maple, and *Poa annua* seedhead. The first eggs of *Ataenius* appear simultaneously with the blossoming of black locust, spirea, hawthorn, and cottonwood seed release. First generation thrid instar larvae and their damage occur during the blossoming of crown vetch, chicory, milkweed, yucca, and black-eyed susan. First generation adults are on the wing and second generation eggs being laid

*Continued on Page 17*

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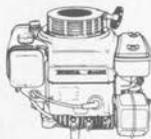
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	G150	Q	AF	X		2 7/16 x 3/4 DIA. TAPPED 5/16 24 UNF			X	4000	X	X		OB	2.64	29.8	
	G150	PE	AF	X		2 7/16 x 5/8 THREADED			X	4000	X	X		OB	2.64	29.8	
	G150	HQ	AF	X		2 3/4 x 3/4 DIA.	X	X	X	4000	X	X		OB	2.64	37.1	
5	GV200	(1)	N40		X	3 5/32 x 1 DIA. TAPPED 3/8 24 UNF			X	3200	X		X	DE	2.01	37.5	
	GV200	(2)	N50		X	1 13/16 x 1 DIA. TAPPED 7/16 20 UNF			X	3200	X		X	DE	2.01	37.5	
	GV200	(3)	N4C		X	3 5/32 x 1 DIA. TAPPED 3/8 24 UNF			X	3700	X	X		DE	OPT.	35.3	
	G200	Q	AF	X		2 7/16 x 3/4 DIA. TAPPED 5/16 24 UNF			X	4000	X	X		OB	3.68	33.1	
	G200	V	A5	X		2 53/64 x 0.755 DIA. TAPER 2 1/4 PER FT.			X	4000	X	X		OB	3.68	33.1	
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	G200	HQ	AF	X		2 3/64 x 3/4 DIA.	X	X	X	4000	X	X		OB	3.68	41.5	
7	G300	Q	B6	X		3 31/64 x 1 DIA. TAPPED 7/16 20 UNF			X	4000	X		X	DE	6.36	48.5	
	G300	V	B6	X		4 11/64 x 7/8 DIA. TAPER 2 1/4 PER FT.			X	4000	X		X	DE	6.36	48.5	
	G300	S	B7	X		2 3/32 x 22 mm DIA.		X	X	4000	X		X	DE	6.36	63.5	
	G300	HQ	B6	X		3 7/32 x 1 DIA. TAPPED 7/16 20 UNF	X		X	4000	X		X	DE	6.36	59.0	
	G300	Q	J0	X		3 31/64 x 1 DIA. TAPPED 7/16 20 UNF			X	4000	OPT.	X	X	DE	6.36	59.0	
10	G400	Q	B6	X		3 31/64 x 1 DIA. TAPPED 7/16 20 UNF			X	4000	X		X	DE	6.36	66.1	
	G400	V	B6	X		4 11/64 x 7/8 DIA. TAPER 2 1/4 PER FT.			X	4000	X		X	DE	6.36	66.1	
	G400	Q	J0	X		3 31/64 x 1 DIA. TAPPED 7/16 20 UNF			X	4000	OPT.	X	X	DE	6.36	76.0	
11	GV400	(4)	AA		X	3 5/32 x 1.0 DIA. TAPPED 7/16 20 UNF			X	3550	X	X		DE	2.44	61.7	
	GV400	(5)	AB		X	3 5/32 x 1.0 DIA. TAPPED 7/16 20 UNF			X	3550	X	X		DE	OPT.	61.7	
	GV400	(6)	JB		X	3 5/32 x 1.0 DIA. TAPPED 7/16 20 UNF			X	3550	X	X	X	DE	OPT.	68.4	
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# Building Root Systems



Between September and May the cool-season turfgrasses in the Mid-Atlantic Region will be initiating new root growth. The proper management practices of the golf superintendent at this time can enhance maximum root development. It is particularly important to encourage the strongest root growth in the fall since these roots will live longer than those formed in the spring. The following are suggestions to encourage maximum root development.

**Watering** - Try to restrict watering the greens from September through May. This will encourage the roots to forge deeply into the soils. Frequent watering will induce shallow rooting. Never water to soften the greens for the golfers. Besides being detrimental to the roots, this practice encourages *Poa annua*.

**Aeration** - Compacted soils are one of the major reasons for limited root growth on putting greens. By aerating the greens at least once every fall and spring, soil compaction is reduced. This also encourages better air and water movement in the top of the soil profile.

**Vertical Mowing** - For optimum playing conditions and agronomic management, the thatch layer on greens should be no greater than 1/4 inch. If thatch is greater, the blades of a vertical mower should be set into the thatch at this time. Thatch reduces turfgrass rooting by restricting fertilizer, air, and water movement to the soil where it will benefit the plant.

**Fertilization** - By fertilizing with a complete fertilizer at the rate of 1/4 pound nitrogen per 1,000 square feet

*Continued on Page 15*

## ARE YOU INTERESTED IN JOINING THE MICHIGAN AND BORDER CITIES GOLF COURSE SUPERINTENDENTS ASSOCIATION?

FILL IN THE QUESTIONNAIRE BELOW AND MAIL TO:



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OR YOU MAY CONTACT THE NEXT GOLF COURSE SUPPLIER WHO CALL ON YOU AND GIVE HIM THE INFORMATION NEEDED FOR APPLICATION.

# INK YOUR OPINION

If you feel strongly about an issue or a piece of new legislation, don't just sit home and worry about it. Let your representative or senator know your opinion by taking a few minutes to write him a letter.

These fifteen suggestions from the Northern Michigan Turf Managers Association Newsletter will help you compose an effective and informative letter.

**Power of a letter** - Letters from home have become the primary form of contact for legislators with the voters back home--and, as a result, the main source for assessing the views of his or her constituency. Your letter can and should be part of that input.

**Form letters** - Avoid form letters or using stereotyped phrases and sentences. They identify your message as part of an organized pressure campaign and will have little or no impact.

**When to write** - In general, write early. Begin to encourage approval or disapproval of a bill while it is in committee, if possible. Try to time the arrival of your letter for midweek--Monday and Friday are heavy mail days and are also the days members of congress travel back and forth from home.

**Stationery** - Write on personal stationery or on plain paper. If you have your own business, you should use your business letterhead.

**Return address** - Put your return address on the letter, not just the envelope. Envelopes are often tossed away before a letter is answered.

**Identify yourself** - Somewhere in the first paragraph, state the name of the legislation about which you are writing. Include the bill number if you can. Sometimes several bills are introduced

*Continued on Page 14*

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# Use of Sulfur to Reduce pH

James A. McAfee

Soil pH (soil reaction) is a term used to describe the acidity or alkalinity of a soil. A pH of 7.0 is neutral, while anything below 7.0 is acid and anything above 7.0 is considered alkaline. Most turfgrasses grow best at a slightly acid pH (6.2-6.5). As the soil pH deviates from this range, many of the plant nutrients in the soil become less available for plant growth. Therefore, maintaining the soil at the proper pH range is very helpful in the maintenance of quality turfgrass. Also, improper soil pH decreases the efficiency of applied fertilizers, thus increasing the cost of turfgrass maintenance.

Soils with a low pH can be corrected by the addition of limestone, while soils with a high pH must be corrected by the addition of some type of acidifying material such as sulfuric acid, acidifying fertilizers (ammonium sulfate, ammonium nitrate, etc.), or sulfur. Rates of lime needed to correct acid soils have been established. However, rates and types of acidifying material needed to correct alkaline soils are not fully understood at this time. Research is currently being conducted by several investigators to establish the best materials, rates, and timing of application to correct high pH soils.

Sulfuric acid will react the fastest to correct a high pH. However, it is too dangerous and corrosive to be used in most turf situations. One of the best materials for correcting high pH soils is

elemental sulfur. Microorganisms in the soil convert the elemental sulfur to sulfuric acid (Table 16). It is the oxidation process for this conversion that creates the acidity. Sulfur comes in three forms; (a) powder, (b) flake, and (c) granulated products. The fine powder reacts the fastest to correct the pH, while the flake product reacts the slowest. The different granulation products are intermediate between the powder and flake.

Last year, several golf courses in the Dallas-Ft. Worth area applied sulfur to their greens. Table 17 shows the results of 6 pounds elemental sulfur per 1,000 sq. ft. applied to Tifdwarf bermudagrass greens. Six months after application the soil pH had been lowered a little more than one unit in the top 4 inches and slightly less than one unit in the 4 to 7 inch range. Lowering the soil pH by one unit with 6 to 10 pounds of sulfur per 1,000 sq. ft. has also been observed on other turf areas in the region.

While sulfur has been shown to be effective in lowering soil pH, it can also create other problems. Over application of sulfur can burn the turfgrass. Twenty pounds of sulfur or more per 1,000 sq. ft. per application to bentgrass caused extreme burning of the bentgrass at the Texas A&M University Turfgrass Research Plots. Application of 400 pounds sulfur per acre in

*Continued on Page 13*

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Two Turfgrass Management students at Michigan State University received TUCO Awards at the 51st Annual Michigan Turfgrass Conference. Recipients are Lawrence D. Kreh, (left) and Steven Chont (right). The awards are being presented by TUCO representative Russell H. Tiller, Jr. TUCO is a Division of the Upjohn Company, Kalamazoo, Michigan.



A Western Michigan Golf Course Superintendent's Association Scholarship is presented to Steven P. Kolongowski (center) at the 51st Annual Michigan Turfgrass Conference at Michigan State University on January 13, 1981. Presenting the scholarship are Roger Barton (left), and Keith Paterson (right), Board Members of W.M.G.C.S.A.



Golf Course Superintendent's Association of America Scholarships are presented to four Michigan State University Turfgrass Management students at the 51st Annual Michigan Turfgrass Conference. Left to right are Gary Pulsipher, Steven D. White, James Timmermen (G.C.S.A.A. Board Member), Michael McElroy, and James Johnson.

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**1** Yes, GCSAA can help you become a better superintendent. One way it does this is through educational seminars and conference sessions it sponsors each year to help you become better informed about turfgrass diseases, pesticides, landscaping and management practices.

**2** Yes, GCSAA is helping to further the advancement of the turfgrass industry. Through the GCSAA Scholarship & Research Fund, Inc., GCSAA provided more than \$13,500 last year in research grants to leading turfgrass programs. GCSAA also provides educational opportunities to turfgrass students through annual turfgrass scholarships.

**4** Yes, GCSAA offers recognition for superintendents. Through its public relations efforts, its magazine, and its award programs, GCSAA helps promote the image and the professionalism of the superintendent. GCSAA also provides information to superintendents about how they can use public relations to promote their own image to their course, their community and their association.

**3** Yes, GCSAA provides a meeting ground for superintendents. Each year, GCSAA sponsors an annual conference and show for its members. Last year more than 6,500 educators, industry representatives and members from all over the world attended. GCSAA's executive committee decided at its last board meeting that the conference experience is so valuable that first-year members should be encouraged to attend by being given free admission.

**5** Yes, GCSAA provides each member with a life insurance program. Supplemental insurance, disability and pension programs also are available.

**6** No, GCSAA can't help you with your golf handicap. You'll have to work on that yourself.



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## Sulfur to Reduce Ph, Cont.

the spring and 400 pounds per acre in the fall caused burning of bermudagrass in Dallas-Ft. Worth. Also, additions of sulfur to some areas caused an increase in salts, particularly sodium (Table 17). It is essential that areas being treated with sulfur have good drainage. Otherwise, an accumulation of sodium could occur and cause problems.

Table 16. Oxidation of elemental sulfur (S) to sulfuric acid in the soil.

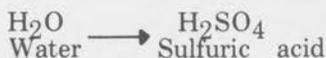
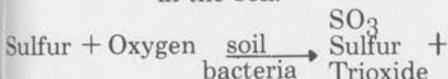


Table 17. Effects of six pounds elemental sulfur per 1,000 ft<sup>2</sup> applied to three Tifdwarf bermudagrass sites in the Dallas-Ft. Worth area.

Site	Soil pH			Sodium		
	12/15/75	6/2/76	12/15/75	6/2/76	12/15/75	6/2/76
	0-4" 4-7"			0-4" 4-7"		
A	8.6	7.4	7.8	910	2,030	1,240
B	8.9	7.6	8.0	900	2,550	1,300
C	9.2	7.9	8.2	-	-	-

As a member of the Board of Directors of the club, I thought it appropriate to define a "Board Member":

A Board Member is said to be a person who knows a great deal about very little and who goes along knowing more and more about less and less until finally he knows practically everything about nothing;

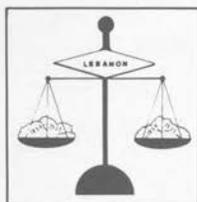
Then you become chairman of the Greens and Grounds Committee. This is a person who knows very little about a great deal and keeps knowing less and less about more and more until he knows practically nothing about everything;

And then the Greens Superintendent starts out knowing practically everything about everything, but ends up knowing nothing about anything, due to his association with Board Members and the Chairman of the Greens and Grounds!

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**Your Opinion, Cont.**

that deal with the same subject matter.

State your position - Explain how the bill would affect you, your family, your business, or even your state or community.

Use facts - Arguments that can't be substantiated are dismissed. Be sure of your facts but don't overload the letter with them. Facts tend to validate your letter and illustrate that you have given a lot of thought to your position.

Be reasonable - Don't ask for the impossible. Don't tell a legislator to vote your way "or else." Do be firm, confident and positive about your position.

Use human terms - Make it your own letter, write in your own style.

Keep it short - Write your letter about one issue. If you are concerned about three issues, write three letters. This makes your letter easier to read and your position easier to understand.

Ask for a reply - Indicate to your legislator that you would appreciate a reply containing his position on the issue. As a constituent, you have a right to know how your representative feels on an issue.

Follow-up - If your legislator's vote on the bill pleases you, thank him for his vote. Everybody appreciates a complimentary letter. If his vote displeases you, let him know that, too.

Suggested salutations - Here are the addresses and suggested salutations to be used when writing members of the U.S. Congress:

The Honorable John Doe

The Honorable John Doe  
House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515  
Dear Mr. Doe:

The Honorable John Doe  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510  
Dear Senator Doe:

### Building Root Systems, Cont.

every three to four weeks in the fall, the roots greatly benefit. Fertilizer at this time is consumed largely by the roots instead of the leaves and stems. Do not over-fertilize or apply fertilizer in the early spring of the year, particularly in March, April, and early May. This will over-stimulate the plant, reducing root growth. Potassium sulfate applications at the rate of 1 1/2 pounds from the bag per 1,000 square feet also help roots in the spring and fall.

**Herbicides** - The preemergent herbicides used for crabgrass, goosegrass, and Poa annua control have side effects on the roots. Are you using these materials wisely? Remember, the grass leaves and stems are not as easily affected by these materials, so injury is not readily visible.

**Air and Light Quality** - Greens which have poor air and light quality were hardest hit by the high temperatures of this past summer. Improve these factors by removing trees and branches along the lines of the prevailing winds and of the rising and setting sun, and the whole turf plant will benefit. This is an excellent time to accomplish tree work.

Building a good root system now will pay off in reducing summer management problems. The greens will require less water, thus lessening the chances of crabgrass and goosegrass germinating. There appears to be a direct correlation between the strength of the root systems and the invasion of these weeds in our region.

All golf courses were reporting increased play in 1980 in the region, and we expected heavy play this fall. To provide the best playing conditions at this time on the greens, be sure to lightly vertical mow and topdress the greens once every 15 to 25 days if climatic conditions are favorable. Also, the greens should be mowed as frequently as possible, preferably five to six times weekly, and the Wiehle or grooved rollers should be attached to the mowers.

**Patrick O'Brien**



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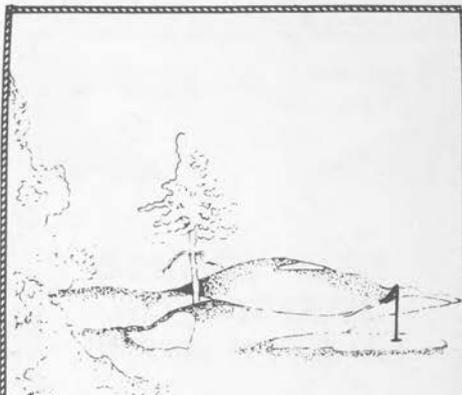
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We would like to thank the following persons for donating their time and money to help operate the Michigan Hospitality Room at the G.C.S.A.A. National Convention in Anaheim, California.

Walt Trombly  
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Charlie Scott  
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Through your donations and efforts we raised enough money to not only purchase the beverages but also help defray part of the cost of the room in which the Michigan and Border Cities G.C.S.A. and the Western Michigan G.C.S.A. paid the difference.

Everyone who attended the Hospitality Room agreed that this was the finest facility the Association has ever operated at a National Convention. Hospitality Room Committee  
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### Ataenius Spretulus, Cont.

while hibiscus (rose-of-sharon, althea) and evening primrose are blooming. Second generation larvae are feeding in greens and fairways through the blossoming of ironweed, staghorn sumac, goldenrod, and bull thistle. Finally, second generation adults are on the wing enroute to suitable overwintering sites (at the tree line of surrounding wooded areas) during new england aster bloom and bull thistle and milkweed seed release.

Based on this information, it would be wise to employ an adult control program at the onset of black locust and hawthorn blossom, and cottonwood seed release. Such a preventative measure should be used only in situations where a large population of *Ataenius* is known to be present based on damage inflicted in the previous year. In cases where no evidence of a harmful *Ataenius* population is available, periodic checks for the larvae and their damage should be made when crown vetch, chicory, milkweed, yucca, and blackeyed susan come into bloom. At this time a larval control program may be employed if needed. Generally 20 to 30 larvae per square foot will cause no apparent damage to fairways.

It is Dr. Niemczyk's and my firm belief that if the gold course superintendent is conscientious in the timing and execution of the recommended control programs, he should be able to get a handle on this turf grub problem within the next year or two.

### WHAT UNION ORGANIZERS LOOK FOR

What do union organizers look for when they begin selecting an organizing target?

A recent published study suggests that unfair and harsh treatment by supervisors is a primary condition of this selection process.

The study - the Dartnell Management Report - also suggests that employees believe they can get even with management for real or imaginary wrongs by joining a union.

*Continued on Next Page*

## Unions, Cont.

Here are some of the items, according to the report, that union organizers look for: 1) Little, if any, personal recognition. Employees believe they could at least get forced recognition from the company; b) Lack of firm and fair discipline; c) Fear of job security. Employees feel they would have greater safety and job security numbers; d) Failure of management to exercise confident leadership; e) "Open-door" complaint procedures that do not open doors; f) Failure of management to help employees identify themselves with their employees. Employees believe they would have the opportunity to achieve a personal need satisfaction through a union; g) Favoritism; h) Lack of standard or inadequate employee benefits; i) Substandard wages; j) Failure to put company personnel policies and employee benefits in writing.

### THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

Beware of half-truths; you may have gotten hold of the wrong half.

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## MICHIGAN TURFGRASS FOUNDATION EXTENDS INVITATION

Dedication ceremonies for the new *Robert W. Hancock Turf Research Center* will be held in conjunction with the 1981 Michigan State University Turfgrass Field Day on September 10, 1981. Located at the corner of Mount Hope Road and Farm Lane, just South of the Michigan State Campus in East Lansing, it is being sponsored by Michigan State University and the Michigan Turfgrass Foundation.

It will be the first Field Day held at the new *Robert W. Hancock Turf Research Center*. The newly developed 10-acre site has become a reality after many years of planning. The building, furnishing, equipment and field plot development costs have mainly been paid for through donations received from individuals and the turf industry. Michigan State University Agricultural Experiment Station has provided 10 per cent of the development costs. Total developmental costs have been over \$300,000. *Robert W. Hancock Turf Research Center* has over 10 acres of field plot area, whereas the old test site had only 3 acres. The Michigan Turfgrass Foundation has been the driving force in developing and coordinating industry support for this new facility.

The new irrigation system is the most sophisticated system ever installed at a turf testing facility. It will be used extensively for research related to efficient energy and water use for the home owner and the turf industry.

All individuals, organizations and companies will be recognized for their contributions which made this new facility available to the people of Michigan and the Northern Turfgrass region.

### Contact persons:

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*Michigan State University*

*East Lansing, Michigan 48824 Phone: (517) 355-2033*

*Gordon LaFontaine, Executive Secretary*

*Lawn Equipment Corporation*

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