

UNITED STATES GOLF ASSOCIATION GREEN SECTION

SOUTHWESTERN DISTRICT
TEXAS A&M COLLEGE
COLLEGE STATION, TEXAS

SOUTHEASTERN DISTRICT
PLANT INDUSTRY STATION
BELTSVILLE, MARYLAND



SOUTHERN TURFLETTER

MARVIN H. FERGUSON
MID-CONTINENT DIRECTOR
NATIONAL RESEARCH COORDINATOR

JAMES B. MONCRIEF
SOUTHWESTERN AGRONOMIST

JAMES M. LATHAM, JR.
SOUTHEASTERN AGRONOMIST

Vol. I No. 3

August 1957

FIRE ANT

The following excerpts are from an article by W. A. Ruffin, Extension Entomologist, Alabama Polytechnic Institute, which appeared in the June 1957 issue of Southern Seedsman.

History

The imported fire ant, Solenopsis saevissima v. richteri Forel., was probably introduced into the United States through the port of Mobile, Alabama, prior to 1925. First report of the insects by farmers came from Mobile County in 1931. Since that time, the insect has spread to eight or nine states in the southeast and at least 50 counties in Alabama. The infestation in this state extends from the Gulf to Morgan County in the Tennessee Valley.

Control

Research work carried on by the A.P.I. Agricultural Experiment Station at Auburn since 1949 has shown that the pest can be economically controlled. Chlordane, dieldrin, or heptachlor have proven most effective in the control of fire ants. Area or broadcast treatment gives the most satisfactory results. Chlordane when applied at the rate of 4 pounds technical per acre, or 2 pounds dieldrin, or 2 pounds heptachlor will give effective control for three or more years. Experimental data indicate that best results are obtained when one of these materials is applied to the surface of the soil in granular form. Dust or wettable powder of one of these materials when mixed with fertilizer gives very good control. The materials can also be applied as a spray, but spray applications give the least effective control.

Where only an occasional mound of fire ants occur, individual mound treatment is recommended. Mounds should be treated with 10 per cent chlordane, or 5 per cent dieldrin, or 5 per cent heptachlor. Knock the mound down with a rake or hoe, then apply at least a cup of one of the recommended materials over the mound area. If readily available, pour 1 to 2 gallons of water over the mound after the insecticide is applied. This is done in order to wash the chemical down to the lower parts of the nest. Since these ants build underground runways extending several feet from the mound, a band of the insecticide should be spread in a circle at least 15 feet from the mound.

GIBBERELIC ACID -- A GROWTH STIMULANT

A great deal of interest is being given to this newly available plant regulator. In general it causes rapid lengthening of stems and a yellowing of leaves. Flower development has been hastened in some plants but retarded in others. Root growth was reduced when stem elongation was greatly stimulated.

Most experimentation has been done with ornamental and vegetable plants. Some work is currently being carried on by the U. S. Department of Agriculture, Beltsville, Maryland. Preliminary results indicate that bentgrass and bluegrass are relatively responsive to the acid. Bermudagrasses and Zoysias show little sensitivity.

For golf course uses, especially southern grasses, much more work must be done with gibberellic acid before its usefulness can be determined.

More information on this material can be obtained from a mimeograph (HCRB - 6) entitled, "Gibberellic Acid -- A Plant Regulator", by Paul C. Marth, W. V. Audia and John W. Mitchell. It is printed at the Plant Industry Station, Beltsville, Maryland.

NEW PUBLICATION

A new USDA Bulletin on insects should prove very useful to those who are as puzzled as we are on which new insecticide works on what insect. This illustrated booklet gives rates and formulations of Aldrin, Chlordane, DDT, Dieldrin, Heptachlor, Lindane, Malathion and Toxaphene, and the insects which they best control. The booklet is

Lawn Insects -- How to Control Them
Home and Garden Bulletin No. 53
United States Department of Agriculture

NATIONAL SCIENTIFIC MEETINGS IN THE SOUTH

Superintendents and turf workers in the South have an opportunity during the next few months to attend some of the sessions of two scientific society meetings.

The American Society of Agronomy meets in Atlanta, November 18 - 22, 1957. Dr. Wayne Huffine, of Oklahoma A. & M. College, is Program Chairman for the Turf Division of the Society. A great many papers concerning turfgrass research will be presented and a turfgrass tour of the Atlanta area is planned.

The second meeting of the Weed Society of America is to be held in Memphis on January 13 - 15, 1958. Conference headquarters will be the Peabody Hotel. Leonard Lett, P. O. Box 9905, Memphis 12, Tennessee, is Chairman of the local Arrangements Committee.

REGIONAL MEETINGS

- | | |
|-----------------|--|
| September 9 | The Carolinas Golf Course Superintendents Association Annual Meeting, Charlotte, N. C. |
| September 17-19 | Florida Turf Conference, University of Florida, Gainesville, Fla. |
| October 21-22 | Louisiana Turfgrass Association Conference, Lafayette, La. |

Southern Turfletter

USGA GREEN SECTION

Sec. 34.66, P.L.&R.
U. S. POSTAGE
1½¢ PAID
Beltsville, Maryland
Permit No. 4