





SPRING

CHECK OUT THESE UGLY WEED INVADERS




There are many different broadleaf weeds that can ruin your lawn's good looks. You may have seen some of these before:

Thistle: Known for its sharp, prickly leaves.



Henbit: A member of the mint family. Leaves have rounded, toothed edges.



Black Medic: Has three leaflets and spreads low to the ground.

Prostrate Knotweed: Forms dense patches and is sometimes confused with crabgrass.

Broadleaf Plantain: Large, oval-shaped leaves with distinctive, tail-like seed heads.

Each of these can be controlled with a combination of good lawn care practices and herbicide treatments.

What Makes a Weedy Lawn?

INFESTATIONS CAN OFTEN BE TRACED TO A LACK
OF CARE AND MAINTENANCE

Lawns that are well cared for have fewer broadleaf weeds. Besides dandelions, plenty of others can show up in your turf if given the chance (see sidebar for some examples).

CONTROLLING WEEDS BY CROWDING THEM OUT

Broadleaf weed seeds can be found in all soils. The best way to stop them from growing is to develop and maintain a dense, healthy stand of grass with good care and maintenance practices. This includes regular fertilization to expand and strengthen your lawn's root system, mowing often enough so that no more than $\frac{1}{3}$ of the grass blade is removed at a time, providing supplemental watering in the absence of rainfall, and treating insects and diseases whenever necessary.

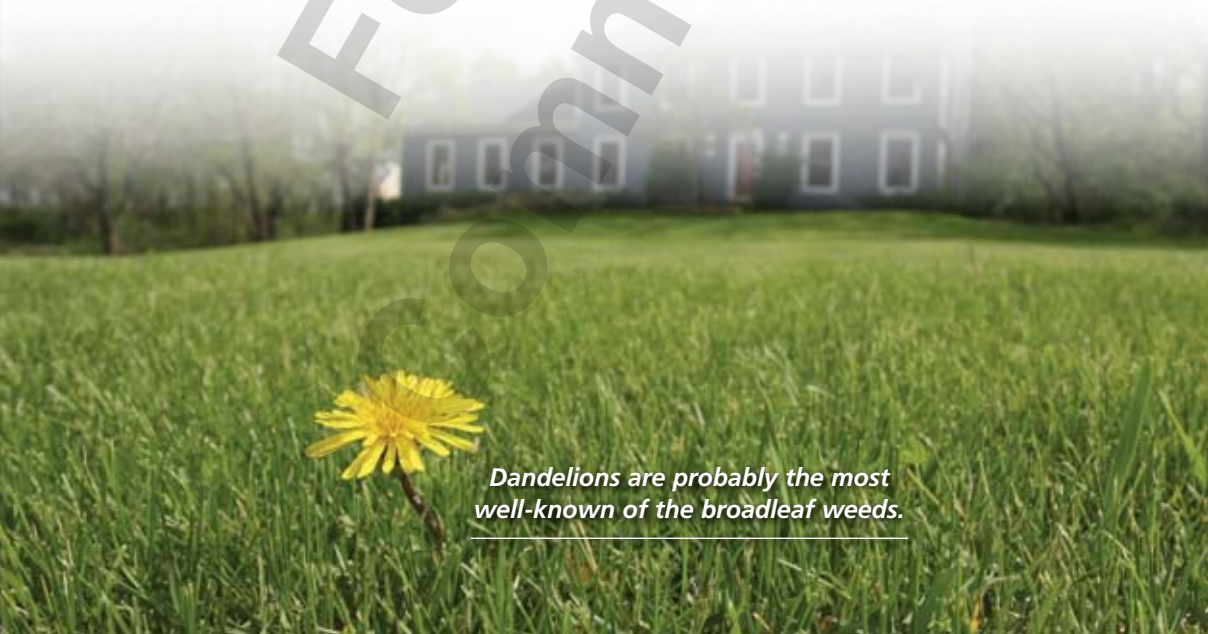
WHAT IF THAT'S NOT ENOUGH?

Even with the best of care, almost all lawns still experience broadleaf weed activity from time to time. If weeds do pop up, herbicides can be used to kill them.

Most broadleaf weeds can't be treated until they've started growing aboveground. So, pre-emergent herbicides (like those used for crabgrass) often can't be used for control. Instead, post-emergent herbicides that are absorbed through the leaves of the weeds must be used.

Once herbicides are applied, it can take up to three weeks for the weeds to completely die off, and repeat applications may be necessary if new weeds emerge after the original treatment. Also, post-emergent controls shouldn't be used on recently seeded lawns until the new turf has been mowed three to five times.

Broadleaf weed control is an ongoing battle that is definitely worth fighting. With proper care and maintenance practices, along with post-emergent herbicide treatments as needed, these pushy pests can be managed effectively.



Dandelions are probably the most well-known of the broadleaf weeds.

IT'S PRIME TIME FOR TURF DISEASES

Slime mold, red thread, leaf spot...of all the lawn-damaging pests, fungus diseases are some of the hardest to control. There are hundreds of diseases that can infect your turf, and the warm, wet conditions of spring make your lawn especially vulnerable. While some fungus diseases are relatively harmless, others can destroy an entire lawn in a very short time.

Fungus spores spread on lawn mower wheels, on shoes, on drops of water during rainfall or watering, and even in the wind. Since they spread so easily, they can be found in every lawn. The trick is not letting them get the upper hand. To reduce the chances of infection, it's important to keep your lawn healthy and growing with proper mowing, watering, feeding and thatch control measures.

If your turf does become infected, treatments can be applied to suppress disease activity. These treatments won't eliminate the fungus from your lawn, but they'll keep the disease in check long enough for your grass to recover (or for weather conditions to change). In some cases, several treatments may be needed.

Of course, with lawn disease, prevention is always better than cure. Keeping your lawn healthy is the best way to prevent a "fungal flare-up."

*Turf showing signs
of fungal infection.*

Brighten Up Your Summer with an "Annual" Floral Display!



Once the spring bulb show is over, you don't have to wait until next year for an encore. With annuals, you can enjoy beautiful color throughout the summer season. The following annuals are known for their ability to thrive in hot summer weather, and each makes a wonderful addition to the landscape:

- Impatiens
- Marigolds
- Sunflowers
- Zinnias
- Begonias
- Portulacas
- Vincas
- Ageratum
- Petunias

Of course, this isn't a comprehensive list. There are many other varieties available depending on your own unique tastes and the specific growing conditions in your landscape.

PLANTING AND CARE

Good soil leads to great flowers. Prior to planting, it's a good idea to amend the soil with organic matter such as peat moss or composted yard waste. This will improve soil structure for better aeration and drainage.

Annuals do have shallow root systems that are prone to drying out, so they shouldn't be planted too deeply. Once planted, they'll benefit from watering every day or two in dry weather. A layer of mulch applied to the planting bed will help to retain moisture in the soil.

Fertilizing your annuals as they're getting established and again in mid-season will promote ongoing blooms. Also, spent flowers should be pinched off (or deadheaded) regularly. This will cause less energy to be used for seed production so that more blooms can be produced.

Annuals can improve any landscape with beautiful color, and we're sure you'll like what you see!



Answers to photo puzzle:
1. There is a butterfly in the red tulips.
2. Red tulips have been added in the foreground.
3. A bird feeder is hanging from the tree.
4. There are ducks in the water.

5. The white daffodils are now pink.
6. There are fewer yellow daffodils.
7. A tree has been added left of center.
8. Pink tulips have been darkened.

Don't Leave Your Landscape in the Dark

SHOW IT OFF WITH OUTDOOR LIGHTING!

Properly illuminated, your landscape will remain enjoyable long after the sun goes down. With strategic placement, landscape lights can enhance your property's nighttime curb appeal. Plus, lighting can be used to increase both safety and security around your home.

First, you'll need to decide what functions you want your outdoor lights to serve. For example, do you want to light up a path or stairway for easier nighttime navigation? Would you like to showcase a favorite planting or fountain? Are you hoping for a dramatic and striking effect, or are you leaning toward something more subdued?

There is no shortage of choices in lighting types and designs. From simple plastic lights to fancy copper fixtures, and from buried to surface-installed packages, there are all sorts of options. Plus, with low-voltage and even solar-powered landscape lights available, beautiful nighttime illumination can be achieved without sending your electric bill through the roof.

HERE ARE SOME LIGHTING TYPES TO CONSIDER:

Uplighting/Downlighting - Lights mounted below or above a plant or object shine up or down to highlight its features.

Path Lighting - Special fixtures mounted on short stakes cast pools of light downward to light a walkway or stairway.

Backlighting - A background area is flooded with light to make objects in front of it appear as silhouettes.

Shadowing - A light fixture in front of an object illuminates it and casts its shadow on a background surface.

Security Lighting - Flood lights mounted on poles or in trees provide broad illumination to discourage intruders.

With the right types of fixtures in the right places, your landscape can really shine!



Both uplighting and path lighting are used in this landscape.

New Trees and Shrubs Need Extra Attention



Newly planted shrubs ready for a fresh layer of mulch.

Installing new trees and shrubs is a great way to improve both the looks and value of your property. With the right care after planting, you can expect your new additions to provide many years of beautiful growth.

The first two to four weeks after planting are critical since the plantings will be adapting themselves to their new home while trying to establish a strong root system. The practices described here will help them get settled in.

Frequent watering. Until their root systems are developed, new trees and shrubs can dry out very quickly. They should be watered daily during the first week after planting, with a deep watering once or twice a week after that. Supplemental watering will be especially important during long stretches with no rainfall.

Mulching. This will help to hold moisture in the soil and protect tender roots from upcoming summer heat.

Fertilization. Applying a balanced, slow-release fertilizer right after planting will provide the necessary nutrients for initial establishment and future growth. Nitrogen will be used for top growth, phosphorus will stimulate root development, and potassium will help plants to retain water and resist disease.

Careful pruning. If any broken, weak or dead branches are present in new trees, they should be pruned away to promote good structure as the tree grows larger. It may also be beneficial to remove certain branches that are interfering with more desirably placed ones.

When it comes to new trees and shrubs, planting is only the first step. Providing proper care after installation will give them a great head start on a long and healthy life!



Mulch Makes for Healthier Plants

Mulch will not only improve your landscape's looks, but it will encourage better growth as well. A fresh application this spring will:

- Conserve moisture by preventing soil from drying out.
- Help to control erosion.
- Reduce competition between your landscape plantings and grass for water and nutrients.
- Keep the soil around landscape plantings cool, moist and shaded (this controls the growth of weeds and unwanted grasses that grow better in hot, dry conditions).
- Keep roots cool, preventing root growth from slowing down as temperatures warm up.

Of course, to get all of these benefits, proper application is important. The total mulch depth should be no more than 4", and mulch should not be piled up against trunks and stems. This subjects trunks and stems to constantly moist conditions, which can encourage disease development.

There's no time like the present for a mulch application. Your plants will thank you for it!



Mulch will improve the looks and health of any planting bed.

Can You Tell the Difference?

See if you can find the eight differences between the two photos. Answers are on page 2.

