

Lawn Care

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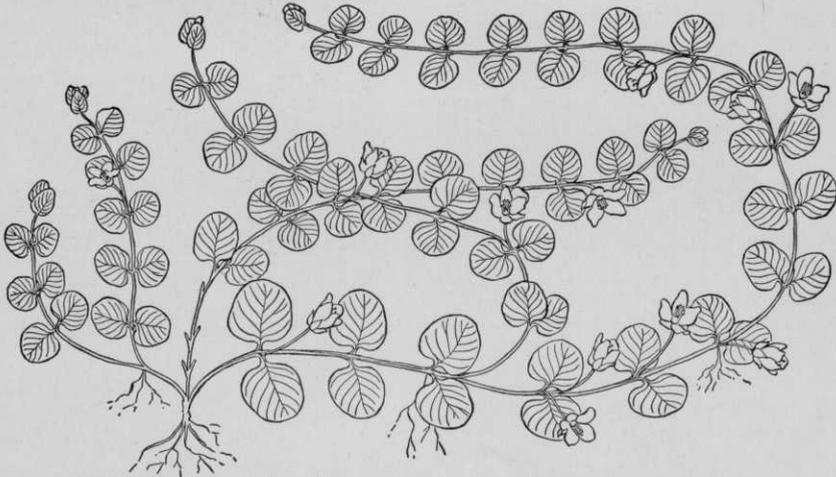
MONEYWORT

MONEYWORT or *Lysimachia nummularia*, as the botanists know it, was named in honor of Lysimachus, Greek General and King of Thrace, back in the third century before Christ. Moneywort, true to its heritage, makes a stubborn stand in moist, shaded areas in lawns. Our discussion of this weed, while timed with events in the Balkans, is inspired more by the fact that its growth has steadily become more noticeable.

Like many other weeds, Moneywort has been thought to have medicinal

stop the flow of blood there has always been a superstition to the effect that injured snakes crawled over the foliage of Moneywort to heal their wounds. Another name for the weed arising from this legend is *Serpentaria*.

Many localities have given Moneywort a special name. Aside from those already mentioned, a common one is Creeping Charlie and others Creeping Jenny, Yellow Myrtle and Creeping Loosestrife. As its various nicknames imply, Moneywort is a creeping, yellow flowered perennial. It blooms from



MONEYWORT (*Lysimachia nummularia*). Note low-growing, vining habit.

properties. One of its names, Loosestrife, meaning release from struggle, is evidence that the weed was thought to possess some healing powers. The bruised leaves of the plant are said to have qualities resembling those of an astringent. Because it was supposed to

June to August. Its leaves have practically no stems and are as round as coins, hence its most common name, money plant or Moneywort. With the exception of its leaves being arranged directly opposite one another on the main stem, Moneywort is similar in

appearance to Thyme-leaved Speedwell. See *LAWN CARE* No. 13, February 1931.

Moneywort vines along the surface of the ground with joints occurring about every inch along its stem. Opposite each of these stem joints are located its two round, waxy leaves. Wherever the joints touch the soil, roots grow out and anchor the plant in a low, prostrate position. Its habit of growth is so low that Moneywort escapes even the closest lawn mowing, unless the stems are first lifted with a rake.

When favored by shade and moisture, Moneywort will become a serious pest in lawns. Since it likes moist ground so well, it may be discouraged by improving the drainage. It may also be controlled by hand weeding, although care should be taken to remove every bit of stem or else a single fragment will take root at a joint and reinfest the spot. It is well to raise the runners of this pest with a rake and follow by mowing closely. Repeated raking and mowing alternately from different angles will eradicate it.

A new type of weeding rake has recently been patented which appears to be most promising in lawn work. It resembles a large table fork with its tines bent or curved backward like a series of hooks. When used with a back and forth raking motion these curved spikes comb through the grass blades without disturbing the turf roots, but at the same time gather up the prostrate stems and foliage of matted weeds such as Moneywort and Chickweed. Its pinching action cleans the pest out by the roots more thoroughly than anything yet perfected.

While it is seldom found in cultivated gardens, when Moneywort inhabits waste places it may be controlled by spraying with Sodium Chlorate. One pound of the chemical is dissolved in one gallon of water. This is a sufficient quantity in volume and strength to spray on 200 square feet of weed

infested ground. The chlorate solution applied in this way will kill practically all vegetation with which it comes in contact. Because of the fire hazard involved Sodium Chlorate must be used with caution as discussed in *LAWN CARE* No. 2 for September 1928.

Moneywort was introduced into this country from Europe as an ornamental. It has been used as a ground cover in shaded places but is definitely a pest in lawns. This weed may still be used as a decorative plant on banks and in rock gardens if the soil is not too dry. But we consider the use of Moneywort as a ground cover inadvisable because the plants are almost certain to get out of hand and eventually become a serious pest in adjacent lawns.

● TO STOOP OR NOT TO STOOP?

Mr. Clarence E. Wilcox of Detroit, Michigan, says:

"After studying all of the various cures and panaceas against the enemies of a good lawn, I still believe that the best way to eliminate undesirable weed growth is by the knee, knife and out-by-the-roots method, plus a little Scotts Lawn Seed in the scar. While it is a slow and tedious method, it is fun if you like it. I have read that 'Cactus Jack' Garner picks up a hundred pecans every day to keep down the belt line. Pulling out Crabgrass is a better cure, in my opinion."

Mr. J. Frank Hamblen of Kenyon, R. I., presents the other side:

"Am amused at the back-breaking, time-wasting energy some spend on Dandelion erasure. Our lawns are very large and require four and three-quarters hours with a power mower to cut, yet with a patented weeder I have, which has two movable jaws on a long handle, I pause for an instant over each weed and then it is out, root and plant; so weeds, including Dog Grass, are the least of my troubles. No back-breaking work—just a little walking."