

# Lawn Care

A discussion of the vital problems of lawn making and maintenance

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## SHEEP SORREL

*Rumex Acetosella*

WE feature in this issue a weed which has been more abundant than usual during the past season, probably as a result of the severe drouth of 1930. It will be pointed out later why such a condition might readily bring a sorrel visitation.

SORREL MEANS "SOUR."

Sheep Sorrel is a common weed, being perfectly at home in practically every nook and corner of North America. Other names by which it is sometimes called are Field Sorrel, Horse Sorrel, Red Sorrel, Sour Weed, or simply Sorrel. The word is derived from the German meaning "sour." Reference is made to the sour taste of the leaves and possibly to the juice contained in the stems of the plant. This juice is considered by veterinarians harmful to horses and sheep.

EASILY RECOGNIZABLE.

The illustration here presented will enable anyone to identify the plant quickly if it is growing in the lawn. Note particularly the shape of the leaves. The plant is a slender perennial with an

abundance of creeping root stalks. There are numerous greenish red flowers, rather inconspicuous and certainly not pretty. In May or June a patch of sorrel is readily seen from quite a distance because of the red mass of ripening seed heads. Each plant produces thousands of small triangular seeds about the size of a white clover seed. As a result it is usually in clover that seeds of sorrel are found and from which it is impossible to separate them. Inferior grades of white clover seed are frequently the hiding place for sorrel and doubtless many lawns have been thus infested.

HELPLESS IN GOOD

SOILS.

It has been discovered that sorrel is most likely to be found in dry, worn-out and acid soils. This is not because sorrel prefers such soil for, naturally, it grows best in fertile, well-drained soils just as do other plants. In good soils, however, it cannot compete with other plants. Following a season of unusual

drouth sorrel may be found in fertile soils but otherwise its presence is a rather good indication of impoverishment and lime deficiency.

HOW TO CONTROL SORREL.

Like most strongly acid plants sorrel



SHEEP SORREL

*Rumex acetosella*



may be killed with chemical sprays. Probably the most satisfactory from the standpoint of safety to the grass is Iron Sulfate (Copperas), the same as used in dandelion control. The proper strength for the spray solution is 1½ pounds of Iron Sulfate to one gallon of water. It may be applied with an ordinary spray pump or even with a watering can if the outlet holes are quite small. Spraying with this solution will prevent seed production. If the plants send out new leaves after the spray has been used a second treatment will finish the job. Spraying is of course most practical when sorrel occurs in patches in an otherwise good stand of grass or when it is growing around rocks or fences. Where not abundant it may be weeded out by hand.

#### LIME.

Other means of checking sorrel are: fertilizing the grass so it will get the upper hand (sorrel can nearly always be smothered out by a heavy growth of grass) or by applying lime where soils are known to be deficient in it.

Ground limestone, which is the best kind to use, should be applied during the winter when the ground is frozen. Ground limestone is slow acting and needs weathering before it will modify the soil condition. It may be used at the rate of 20 pounds per 1000 square feet. Hydrated lime is quick acting and so not more than 15 pounds per 1000 square feet should be applied. This type is preferable if necessary or advisable to make the application in early spring or fall.



#### FINDS BINDER CONVENIENT.

"I thank you most heartily for the set of your Lawn Care bulletins and for the handsome binder. I will make good use of the information contained in the bulletins and am sure that I can find that

information now, put up in such convenient form."—Alfred K. Mills, Annville, Pennsylvania.

If you do not have a LAWN CARE binder one will be sent for actual cost of 50c, postage paid. A full set of bulletins will be enclosed so you may pass your present series along to some friend. More than seven thousand LAWN CARE binders are in use. Scores were ordered sent out as Christmas remembrances.



## Looking Ahead

WHEN in August, 1928, LAWN CARE ventured forth with considerable timidity we felt reasonably sure that enough worth while information could be assembled to keep it going for at least two or three years. Now we find this little publication entering upon its fourth year without having more than scratched the surface. At least a dozen more lawn weeds are to be treated and there are other subjects of equal importance upon which there is valuable data to be imparted. During the year 1932 we expect to feature Purslane, a weed which was very abundant last year; Quack Grass, one of the most tenacious weeds known; Nimble Will and Goose Grass, common in lawns but not generally identified. But we shall always take the liberty of pinch-hitting with a discussion of some seasonal pest or pestilence such as the sod web worm which wrought so much havoc last summer.

#### SERIES OF NEW EXPERIMENTS.

LAWN CARE can render the most valuable service if those who read it contribute ideas and suggestions. The lawn laboratory is large. We all work in it. Be generous with your findings so others may have the benefit of your experiences. We can be more helpful than ever this year as a result of a coöperative program of experiments being carried on

in conjunction with the State Experiment Station through the Department of Soils at Ohio State University. A series of test plots of various grass mixtures and separate varieties were laid out last fall. We are sponsoring them inasmuch as no public funds were available for this important work. In a later issue of *LAWN CARE* we shall submit a chart of the plots and explain the experiments that are in progress.



### Seed Early

**L**AWN SEED should be sowed when the ground is in the honeycombed stage. Usually this is in February or early March. It is equally good practice to seed while there is still a little snow on the ground except, of course, on slopes where the seed would be likely to wash off. If this late winter or early spring sowing is practiced the seed will be buried and sprout just as soon as the ground thaws. Grass seed germinates in much cooler temperature than the average weed and there is naturally quite an advantage if the grass gets ahead of the weeds.

#### FEED LATER.

The middle of April is a good time to apply fertilizers. By this date the frost is usually out of the ground and the food is immediately available to the grass. Turf Builder is built on the ideal grass food formula 10-6-4. An April application will boost along new seedings and add new vigor to the old.

Light raking to remove dead grass and debris as well as one or two light rollings to iron out irregularities and press the heaved grass back into the soil, will also be helpful. Early attention to the lawn will make it less of a problem in hot midsummer.

### Kerosene for Dandelions

**F**ROM Mr. Charles L. Snider of Bellefontaine, Ohio, we have this comment:

"I have tried Sodium Chlorate and Sulfate of Ammonia for killing dandelions without success. I have tried Iron Sulfate, which does fairly well although it doesn't kill as many of the roots as I thought it would. In fact I have rigged up various remedies but the sure way to kill them, in my opinion, is to use a liquid weed killer by applying it with a probe that drops a small amount of the solution into the hole after the top of the plant has been cut off. If a few drops of kerosene are put on the root there will be no danger of resprouting. I find that cutting off the tops of the plants and then using the kerosene is the method least likely to injure the grass."

Gasoline may be used in a similar manner by simply injecting it into the plant with the aid of a long spouted oil can.

Dandelions and crab grass continue to be the greatest enemies of good lawns. We shall be glad to receive information about methods of combat that have proven most practical and effective in your war on these or any other weeds. *LAWN CARE* is read by more than seventy-five thousand folks with lawns. It affords a fine opportunity for the exchange of ideas.



### WANTED—A builder who thinks lawns are important

A new York contractor wrote to us a year ago as follows:

"We are planning to build 400 lawns in — County, and our chief aim is a quick green mat because we sell the houses as soon as they are completed. What may happen to the lawn a year from now does not interest us much."



Many lawns appear to have been made with that thought in mind. We asked this gentleman if he did not think his prospective buyers would prefer to pay just a little more and have the assurance that the lawn was well-made, sowed with good seed and likely to be still *better* a year hence? Twelve months have passed and no answer!



## Iron Sulfate Reduced

“IRON SULFATE is not always procurable in fine powder. In crystal form it is very hard and the operation of reducing it to powder is not only difficult but there is discomfort and possible danger if flying particles get in the nose or eyes.

“One half pound of Iron Sulfate will dissolve in nine ounces of water at boiling temperature. This solution while hot is stirred into nine pounds of finely sifted sand. Use an earthen crock and a wooden paddle and work fast. A few days in the sunlight and occasional stirring will drive out most of the moisture. This procedure gives a finer and more even mixture than could possibly be had by using the powdered sulfate. A pound or two of Sulfate of Ammonia may be added to the final mixture to provide stimulation for the grass.”—John S. Stewart, 1030 Fayette Avenue, Springfield, Illinois.



## Spiked Roller Preferred

WE ARE indebted to Mr. L. W. Childress, President of the Columbia Terminals Company, St. Louis, for the following opinion:

“It frequently happens in this section that the ground is not in condition to be raked during the early part of March, just after spring seeding time. In this connection I wish to state that for the past year or two I have used the spiked

roller in preparing the lawn for seed. Through its use I have gotten very much more satisfactory results. Prior to its use I found in certain places that it was almost impossible to seed the lawn in such a manner as to prevent the seed washing away following a rainfall.”



## Scott Publications

Lawns, a small booklet of condensed facts about the making of a new lawn and the improving of an old one.

Bent Lawns, an illustrated booklet which tells how to make and maintain a Creeping Bent Lawn.

Converting to Creeping Bent, a folder which explains four methods of remaking and improving an old lawn by using Bent.

Lawn Making and Maintenance. Forty pages of specific information that will be especially helpful in the building or care of large lawn areas.

The Putting Green. An illustrated book telling how to construct, plant and maintain grass greens. Gratis to greens chairmen, greenkeepers, or any golf club officers. To all others at actual cost of 25 cents.

Binders for Lawn Care, made of imitation leather and capable of holding the next ten year's bulletins, are furnished at actual cost of 50c, postage paid. Each binder sent out contains a complete set of LAWN CARE bulletins.

In addition to the above we will send to anyone a full set of the issues of Lawn Care which have preceded this one. There have been eighteen and the following lawn pests have been discussed: Plantain, Crab Grass, Dandelions, Moss, Grubs and Beetles, Chickweed, Buckhorn, Ground Ivy, Yarrow, Earthworms, Heal-all, Ants, Speedwell, Creeping Buttercup, Sod Web-Worms, Moles, Knot Grass.