

Lawn Care

REG. U. S. PAT. OFF.

PUBLISHED IN FEBRUARY, MARCH, APRIL, AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER BY
O. M. SCOTT & SONS CO., MARYSVILLE, OHIO

June 1932

FIFTH YEAR

Number 20

SPOTTED SPURGE

ONE of the lawn weeds most frequently sent in for identification last summer was Spotted Spurge. With the belief that it may be equally prevalent this year we selected it to feature this issue of Lawn Care.

Spotted Spurge is readily recognizable. As the illustration shows the plant forms somewhat of a mat because of the radial basal branches which usually lie flat. The stems are slender, somewhat reddish on top, green underneath. Leaves are small, opposite, usually oblong, often having a reddish blotch in the center. It has a long, branching fibrous root system with many fine feeding rootlets.

Every part of this weed exudes a poisonous milky juice which will irritate the skin to a red rash or even blister it. Nothing eats this pest. Even insects leave it untouched.

Spotted Spurge is very hardy and adaptable. It is frequently seen in cracks of flagstone walks and other places where it is subject to trampling.

Found in Dry Soils

Other common names for Spotted Spurge are Creeping Spurge, Milk

Purslane, and Spotted Matweed. It is an annual, propagates by seeds, and blooms between June and October. Its range is throughout America except in the extreme north. In dry soils of low fertility Spurge is most frequently found. The reason is easily explained. In the thick, fleshy stems there is enough fluid to keep the plant alive when other types of vegetation are suffering.

Prevent Seeding

This lawn weed may be kept in subjection if the plants are prevented from seeding. Spotted Spurge or Milk Purslane, as it is quite often called, grows so prostrate that it easily escapes the mower. Even a low cutting golf course greens mower will not control this pest once it gains headway.

If this prostrate grower is pulled out before it starts to seed, a future crop is prevented. When the soil is wet it pulls out easily. Artificial watering with a garden hose will condition the ground for an attack from this angle. In doing so wear gloves to avoid the stain and irritation produced by the "milk." Some people are not as allergic to this juice as are others.



SPOTTED SPURGE
(*Euphorbia maculata*—L.)

Gather together as many of the prostrate branches as possible before lifting on this weed. The root is less apt to be broken short if this manner is used.

A large area may be cut out with a hoe. Iron sulphate has also been found to have a discouraging effect upon Spurge and may subdue plants which have not become too healthy and vigorous. Use this chemical in solution at a rate of 4 pounds per 1000 square feet according to the directions in Lawn Care Number 6 for August 1929. Note that this procedure can not be used on Bent Grass turf as the iron sulphate would be detrimental to this type of grass at the suggested rate.

In Impure Seed

It is possible to get an infestation of Spurge in poorly cleaned seed although it is more likely to be found in clovers than among the seeds of turf grasses.

Summer Maintenance

During very hot, dry weather, when nature slips up on her watering program, lawns should not be sprinkled daily but watered once or twice weekly. Light, too frequent sprinkling coaxes the grass roots to the surface, a condition which is undesirable because the hot sun and wind soon parch them. Except in the case of very sandy soils one soaking every week is sufficient for the health of the lawn.

Mowing is of importance, too. Prof. L. S. Dickinson of the Department of Agronomy, Massachusetts State College, has the following to say about mowing the lawn:

"The more frequently a lawn is clipped the more fertilizer is required. No turf except putting or bowling

greens should be clipped by a regular calendar schedule. During the very hot periods the lawn mower should be put down cellar and the lawn permitted to grow taller than in the growing season. Upon returning the lawn mower to use after the dry spell the blade should be lifted for the first mowing."

How To Kill Toadstools

During moist, warm, muggy weather toadstools frequently appear in lawns. They are more apt to develop in soil that is rich in organic matter. The ordinary process of mowing will sometimes destroy them but the use of a chemical may be necessary to control persistent infestations. Here is the formula recommended by the Department of Agriculture at Washington:

"Soak the ground thoroughly with sulphate of copper or Bordeaux Mixture. Another method is to loosen the soil and soak with iron sulphate using one pound to 1½ gallons of water. The Bordeaux Mixture is preferred as it does little or no damage to the grass."

The following is a little more complicated but is suggested by Edward C. Vick, garden editor of the Pittsburgh Sun-Telegraph:

"Dissolve one pound of copper sulphate in an earthen or wooden vessel. In another vessel, when the copper sulphate is ready for use, dissolve a pound of quicklime. Add the limewater to the copper sulphate and water to make six gallons. Make holes in the lawn by using a garden fork over that area which is infested with toadstools and for two feet in advance of the direction in which they are extending. Apply the solution four times at intervals of one week."

O. M. SCOTT & SONS CO.



MARYSVILLE • • OHIO

EVERY PACKAGE OF SCOTT'S LAWN SEED BEARS THIS TRADE-MARK AND IS SEALED FOR YOUR PROTECTION