

Lawn Care

REG. U. S. PAT. OFF.

PUBLISHED IN FEBRUARY, MARCH, APRIL, AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER BY
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February 1933

SIXTH YEAR

Number 23

NIMBLE WILL

Other Names—Drop Seed Grass, Wire Grass.

Perennial—Propagates by seeds and by rooting at the joints.

Seed Time—September to October.

Range—From Maine to Minnesota and southward to the Gulf.

Habitat—Lawns, both in open areas and in woods or in shady places around buildings.

This weed is a creeping type of low growing, slender stemmed, small leaved grass. It has underground stems and spreads freely in lawns. Its tough, interlacing, fibrous roots make a sod which is very difficult to break up. A single plant may in time completely occupy as much as a square foot of surface. Because of its spreading, branching nature, Nimble Will

makes a thick growth which is often mistaken for a desirable lawn variety.

Leaves Long and Slender

The stems of Nimble Will are ten inches to two feet long, somewhat flat-

tened, usually prostrate at the base and often rooting at the lower joints and from these joints flowering stalks are erected. The leaves are very narrow being no more than an eighth of an inch wide and rough to the touch. The panicle (irregular flower cluster where the seeds ripen) is very slender, weak and bending.

Difficult to Eradicate

By its very nature of growth, Nimble Will qualifies as a troublesome lawn pest. It is hard to eradicate because of its re-seeding habit. Comparatively few people who have this weed in their lawns know it by name, but they are familiar with it by sight.

Nimble Will is particularly unsightly when dormant during late winter and early spring. Its brown, dead looking growth has an appearance similar to dead Crabgrass. However, it need not be confused with the latter, since Nimble Will does not flatten against the ground like Crabgrass, and,



NIMBLE WILL (*Muhlenbergia Difussa*)

in addition, the plants are much more leafy.

Means of Control

Where Nimble Will appears in fields that can be cultivated its suppression is not difficult. In lawns, however, it is a pest for which there is no simple control method. Of course it is important to remove the maturing plants before the seeds ripen. As in the case of Crabgrass, Nimble Will may be smothered out by covering an infested area with boards or tarred paper.

Nimble Will, recognized early in the summer, should be cut closely and the clippings removed frequently, thereby preventing its producing seed. Small patches solid with this pest may be burned out by sprinkling the moist foliage with ammonium sulfate. It will be necessary to repeat this treatment several times before the roots are killed. Finally when the new shoots reappear, the bare spots should be reseeded with a lawn mixture free of weed seed.

A more thorough and less tedious job may be done by cutting out the Nimble Will patches to a depth of 2 or 3 inches and resodding the spots. If there is no sod available, fill the areas with weed-free soil, fertilize and seed with a good lawn mixture.

"Herbae Mira" Fake

A certain gentleman wearing the name of Doctor Miller has been touring Indiana and Ohio the past two months in company with a huge touring car and two colored attendants, delivering to the unsuspecting a marvelous lawn mixture which he called "Herbae Mira." It seems that this grass would grow only 2½ inches high (at least before the Doctor left town), and

thus the trusty mower might be left untouched from spring until fall. "Herbae Mira" was sold at from \$1.00 to \$1.50 per pound.

A customer of ours at Muncie, Indiana was good enough to send us a sample of the seed. "Herbae Mira" was identified at once as a mixture of very ordinary domestic Rye Grass and other temporary varieties, obtainable at almost any seed store for no more than 15c per pound. These grasses used alone are far too coarse for a lawn and instead of growing 2½ inches tall they are objectionable in particular because they grow quite tall and very fast. The "Doctor" simply had his facts in reverse. After selling his product quite freely in Muncie the caravan moved to Toledo, Ohio. By that time the Chamber of Commerce had notified the Toledo Better Business Bureau. A bulletin was promptly sent to local concerns which might be affected and the "Doctor" immediately checked out of the Hotel Commodore Perry for parts unknown.

Please accept this admonition in the friendly spirit in which it is given. Don't fall for anything radically new and novel in the realm of plant life without consulting your Experiment Station or the Department of Agriculture at Washington. They have nothing to sell and you may be sure they are abreast of the times.

NOTE: Lawn Care has traced the activities of Dr. Miller all over the country. He has been frequently detained in penal institutions. Upon being released he has promptly returned to his "profession." Dr. Miller is well along in years so there is reason to believe that his "gypping" days are almost over. We trust he has no junior partner.

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