**Armyworms hit the Northeast, far afield from usual range**

**By JOEL JOYNER**

MASHPEE, Mass. — The media has tried hard this summer to whip up a public hysteria about armyworms, but superintendents have taken the so-called invasion pretty much in stride.

“They’re fairly easy to kill,” said Bill Levesque, assistant superintendent here at Willowbend Golf Course. “And they probably won’t survive the winter this far north.”

Truth be told, armyworms are a menace. They often travel and feast in masses, like soldiers moving across enemy land. They’ll devour turfgrass leaves right down to the nubs before migrating to a new sector. They’ve been known to consume up to 10 acres of crops within a 24-hour period.

Usually found in the South and Midwest, great numbers of armyworms made their way to the Northeast this year, borne on the winds of tropical Storm Allison. They hit the region by the millions.

**‘BIBLICAL PROPORTIONS’**

As homeowners grew panicky about their lawns, the media picked up the scent of a big story. In sensationalized stories, they tossed around terms like “attack,” “siege” and even “plague.” One reporter totally lost his grip and said the invasion was “of Biblical proportions.”

“Armyworm” is really a misnomer — it’s not a worm at all. The pest is actually a caterpillar with a voracious appetite for turfgrass, wheat, corn, rye, and hay crops. The insects

Continued on page 10

---

**Cook 11th American to qualify as Master Greenkeeper**

**By JOEL JOYNER**

BLOOMFIELD HILLS, Mich. — Steve Cook, superintendent here at the Oakland Hills Country Club, is now one of the 31 certified Master Greenkeepers worldwide and the 11th American to achieve the prestigious distinction from the British International Golf Greenkeeper Association (BIGGA).

A graduate of the University of Illinois, where he earned a B.S. in ornamental horticulture, Cook has nearly 20 years of experience in the golf course maintenance profession.

Cook said he undertook the process as a personal challenge. “If you’re going to be a superintendent, you might as well get as many certifications as the industry offers,” he said. “I consider myself a goal-oriented person, and it was one more goal.”

Building his resume in hopes of higher

Continued on page 9