

The War Against Ants

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HAVING been asked to write an article for the magazine and as most of the boys have written about grasses, construction, methods of upkeep, etc., I think it might be well to start something about the many pests and annoyances a greenkeeper has to contend with.

While at the Chicago meeting and looking over the golf show with my friend, Alex McPherson of Detroit, he asked me if I had found anything for ants. Of course I answered I was using carbon disulphide when any bothered my greens. He said, "Yes, but we don't get the grubs," and I agree with him.

Anyone who finds a remedy to get the grubs as well as the ants has a fortune made.

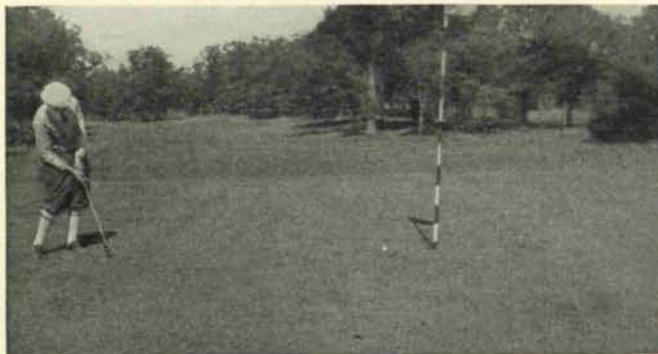
Common Varieties of Ants

To the average man ants are just ants, so perhaps it may be of interest to discuss a few types of ants and their habits. The ones most commonly found on greens throughout the United States are the common little brown ants. They are usually about 3/16 of an inch in length. Then we have the small red ant and the larger type black ant. There are several other varieties, but these and the agricultural ants of Texas, and the southwest will suffice. They belong to the same family as the red ants and are found in Florida, and other parts of the southern United States. Let us note briefly their general habits.

Queen Ant Lays 80,000 Eggs Every Day

Take for instance a colony of ants which is founded by a King and Queen—a very fruitful pair. The Queen when established in her home produces nearly 80,000 eggs in each 24 hours. So it behooves the greenkeeper in getting rid of ants to be sure to get this lady or his work is for nothing.

In cold weather ants (adult) hibernate in a dormant state. In the spring when it begins to get warm they swarm, fly about, mate and start new colonies. As soon



Thirteenth Green at Tuckaway



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as a new colony is started the Queen produces her eggs. It takes about a month to hatch after the eggs are laid, and grubs are then produced. In two weeks they are full grown. They spin a cocoon in which to change, or change directly without such covering. No doubt you have seen ants carrying white objects around an ant hill. These are the eggs. In summer they are found in any ant colony. The adult hatches from these eggs and immediately takes part in the work of the colony.

Borax and Sugar Not Effective

The food of the ant is both animal and vegetable. They all like sweets, sugar for instance—some species even gather honey. So what would be more natural than to get these pests by sweets? In bygone days many of the boys tried to exterminate them with a mixture of borax and sugar, but very often the results were not as expected. The ants seemed to thrive. The sugar would attract them and they seemingly got fat from the borax. So this method of extermination did not last long with the greenkeepers. Many other remedies have been tried with varying success.

Carbon Disulphide Does the Work

The one which has proven the best, I find is the carbon disulphide solution. In using this I use 2 to 3 ounces to a gallon of water, and mix thoroughly. I put a little of this solution in the opening, close the hole and press it down. This usually gets them. I have also gotten them by taking a small desk sponge, put a little molasses on it, set it on the ant hill and when full drop it in a pail of hot water. Neither of these methods gets the grubs or nits, and usually have to be repeated during the season.

Now let us hear from some of the other members regarding the different pests they have to contend with and the remedies they use for extermination. No doubt any articles written on this subject will be of interest to the readers.