

The Revenge Of Bermudagrass In Paradise

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Despite our best efforts to create monostands of turf on greens, tees, fairways and roughs, undesirable grasses always seem to find a way to invade. In cool-season turf climates the ubiquitous *Poa annua* somehow always seems to find a way to invade areas where turf managers and players want it least. In colder climates, the result of *Poa annua* invasion can be catastrophic, as *Poa annua* is vulnerable to significant winter injury. In milder climates, *Poa annua* is less problematic but more likely to become the dominant species.



Maintaining a monostand of bermudagrass or seashore paspalum has proven very difficult in Hawaii. If the issue is purely cosmetic, is it worth the effort?

In warm-season turf climates undesirable weeds such as goosegrass, crabgrass, and other aggressive monocots and dicots adversely impact playing conditions and aesthetics. Fortunately for turf managers and golfers, products exist that can selectively remove many unwanted plants.

However, a difficult situation is occurring on some Hawaiian golf courses. For decades, bermudagrass golf courses have been struggling with seashore paspalum invasion. Now, however, many courses are being established with seashore paspalum and facing the inverse problem – bermudagrass invasion. The problem in both situations is the absence of a product that can consistently and effectively remove either grass from a stand of the other.

A mixed stand of bermudagrass and seashore paspalum can provide excellent, healthy playing conditions, but courses are embarking on eradication efforts simply due to the visual difference between the two grasses. Is this necessary? More importantly, are golf courses comprised of only one grass species sustainable? A pure monostand of turf over an area as large as a golf course is simply not a natural situation and in the end nature always wins.

Speaking of nature's tendency to provide unexpected visitors, Hawaii has started to attract some surprise visitors from the Mainland. While the state bird of Hawaii is the nene, a rare goose found only on the Hawaiian Islands, recently a different kind of goose was spotted. A pair of snow geese were seen grazing at the Turtle Bay Resort on the island of Oahu. Snow geese are an extremely rare sight in Hawaii and perhaps this sighting goes to show that whether we are discussing grasses or geese there always will be some surprise guests.

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