times of the year. If severe, all blades and stems are killed, but in most cases, some blades and stems go unharmed. Infested blades of the grass usually remain upright but become brown in most cases, some blades and stems are killed, but grass surrounding the bleached spot. The spots may coalesce into larger areas. Dollarspot. Diseased areas are usually bleached spots two to three inches in diameter. Lesions can be seen on the leaves of the grass surrounding the bleached spot. The spots may coalesce into larger areas. Dollarspot seems to be most prevalent on zoysiagrass and bermudagrass. Pythium. Pythium primarily attacks bermudagrass. The affected areas are usually in streaks with the individual blades matted together and slimy in appearance. White cottony growth may also be seen on the blade. Helminthosporium. The disease is characterized by an overall thinning of the turf. Lesions on the leaf are purplish to brown. In severe cases the leaves will wilt and die and the sheath may rot. Helminthosporium affects primarily bermudagrass. Gray leaf spot. Gray leaf spot primarily attacks st. augustinegrass. Lesions occur on the leaves and may be found on the stems. These lesions are oblong with an ash center and a purpule to brown margin. The disease is most prevalent during hot, rainy weather. In severe cases the area may have a scorched appearance.

Nematode. Damage is characterized by a slow decline in the turf, a restricted root system and a general thinning of the area. Because the roots are affected, these areas usually become yellowish and wilt easily.

Diagnositic Tools Used in Analyzing Lawn Problems

Soil tube. A soil tube can be used to take soil samples for making comparisons between good and bad areas in the lawn. Such comparisons may include the effective root depth, the condition of the roots, and the moisture content of the soil. Samples also can indicate compaction, layering, or the presence of mat or buried materials. The tube also can be used to take soil samples to determine the nutritional level and pH of the soil, or for nematode analysis. Soil tubes may be purchased from many garden supply stores.

Hand lens. A hand lens is useful for magnifying insects, disease lesions, and nutritional deficiencies. It is handy for examining roots for nematodes and looking at soil particles.

Metal can. A metal can with the bottom and top cut out is the best tool to use in determining the presence of chinch bugs on a lawn. The can is pressed into the soil and water is added. Chinch bugs then float to the top.

Patch test. The patch test can be utilized to verify the presence of nematodes, insects, and certain nutritional deficiencies. For example, if nematodes are suspected, a very small area can be treated with a nematocide. If the area responds to the treatment, your diagnosis is probably correct. If there is a response to the treatment, your diagnosis is probably correct.

Meeting Dates


Alabama Nurserymen’s Assn. Meeting. Admiral Semmes Hotel, Mobile, June 6-8.

Mississippi Turfgrass Conference. Mississippi State College, State College, June 14-16.

Western Chapter, International Shade Tree Conference. Mirimarer Hotel, Santa Barbara, Calif., June 20-23.

Massachusetts Nurserymen’s Assn. Summer Meeting. Mahoney’s Rocky Ledge Nursery, Winchester, Aug. 4.


Midwest Regional Turf Field Days. Purdue University, Lafayette, Ind., Aug. 16-17.


Penn State Turfgrass Field Day. on campus, University Park, Pa., Sept. 15-16.

Ohio Agricultural Experiment Station. Lawn and Ornamentals Field Day. Wooster, Sept. 21-22.