Dicot weeds

In a universe of hundreds of dicot weeds, a limited number can tolerate repeated mowing of managed turf sites. In order to provide a broader representation of turf weeds, we have included a select number of these dicot weeds. Those presented herein were chosen for their ability to survive in turf, often as a continuing pest. Several of the species can persist even at fairly short mowing heights; others are active in cool weather.

**Identifying a dicot weed**

Unlike the prototypical size and shape of monocot weeds, the shape and vegetative growth habits of many dicot weed groups are visually unique. Also, the distinctive traits of monocots—seedheads, ligules and collars—are not always present, making visual identification more important.

We suggest the following process for identifying dicot weeds:

- Look for a sample flower if available
- Leaves: check for identifying characteristics (size, shape, notches, venation or coloration)
- Stems: check how the leaves are held (opposite or alternate), shape and color
- Flowers: check color, size and composition (single, double or compound)
- Location: take note of the conditions in which the weed is growing (shade, compacted soil, etc.)
- Distribution: confirm that this weed species has been identified in your state

**DANDELION**
aka *common dandelion*

A large rosette-type perennial herb

Leaves growing from plant base are long, narrow and deeply notched

Points of leaf lobes point backward toward base of plant

Has large, slightly mounded yellow flowers on hollow stems

Mature seedhead is a round puffball with seeds that are easily dislodged

**DISTRIBUTION:**

[Map showing distribution of dandelion in the United States]
DICOTS

HENBIT
aka dead-nettle

A mostly erect winter annual or biennial

Leaves are similar to mint: rounded, toothed, heavily veined with soft hairs on top, held opposite on square stems

Single flowers are trumpet-shaped, pale purple and project from ends of stems

Seen primarily in spring, dying with heat

DISTRIBUTION:

KNOTWEED
aka prostrate knotweed

• A persistent low-growing summer annual

• Prefers compacted soil of pathways and along drives

• Leaves are blue-green, up to 1 inch long and ¼-inch wide

• Small single white to pink flowers are found at the junction of the leaves and the stem

DISTRIBUTION:
DICOTS

PURSLANE
aka common purslane

A prostrate, succulent summer annual
Leaves are shiny green, wedge-shaped, thick and up to 1 inch long
Stems are thick, fleshy and purple to brown in color
Plants are very drought-resistant
Small, single yellow flowers may appear in the leaf clusters at end of stems

COMMON CHICKWEED
aka starwort, winterweed

A low-growing winter annual
Plant prefers shaded moist sites
Opposite small leaves are carried on tender stems
Stems may root at leaf nodes
Small compound flower composed of 5 pairs of two pale purple petals
Plants die back with summer heat, but can survive year round at cool sites

DISTRIBUTION:

Indigenous states
SPOTTED SPURGE

A prostrate fleshy summer annual herb

Leaves are opposite, oblong, and up to ½-inch long

Upper leaf surface has a purple to brown blotch along center vein

Hairy stems produce a milky-white sap when broken

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