

TurfGrass TRENDS



Volume 4, Issue 10

October 1995

Nematode Disorders of Turfgrasses: How Important are They?

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Nematodes are wormlike aquatic animals (Figure 1) that live in marine and fresh waters, in thin water films on soil particles, and as parasites within the tissues of other living organisms, including man (see Table 1). This diverse group of animals is second only to arthropods in the number of species present in nature. Regardless of the regions of the world and the habitats in which they are found, the vast majority of nematode genera are parasites of vertebrate animals.. Only a small percentage of all nematodes are plant parasites, with a considerably smaller subset of those being parasites of turfgrasses.

Nematodes Not Taken Seriously as Important Turfgrass Pests

While plant parasitic nematodes are clearly recognized as important pests of agricultural and some horticultural crops, particularly in the warmer regions of the world, their role as pests of turfgrasses is not always apparent. Managers of warm-season turf-

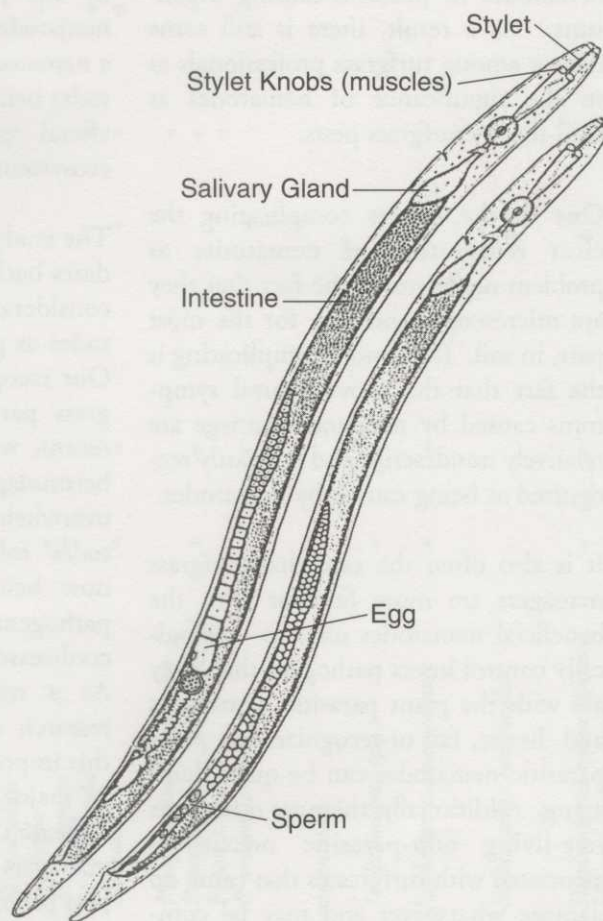


Figure 1. Diagrammatic representation of a typical male and female plant parasitic nematode. (Figures 1, 2, and 4 adapted from G.N. Agrios, *Plant Pathology*, 3rd edition, San Diego, CA: Academic Press 1988.)

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