Trees Could Be Affected By 'Ovedose' of Weed Killer

Are any of your customers reporting that some of the trees in their lawns seem to be dying from a strange disease?

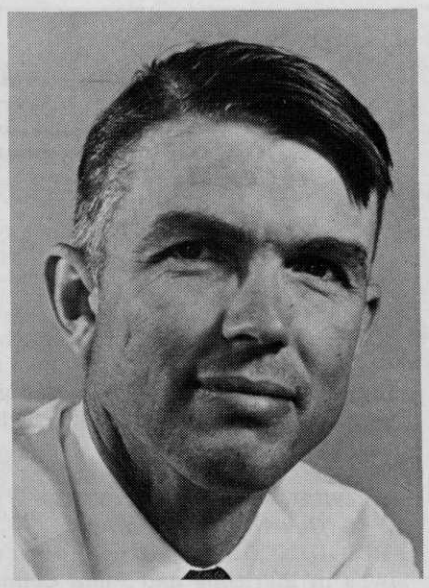
They may be suffering from an overdose of weed killer, suggests Dr. Francis R. Gouin, University of Maryland horticulturist.

"These materials may be effective in controlling weeds while fertilizing lawns, but their use has resulted in increased injury to ornamental plants. Most of the plants will grow out of a slight injury, but repeated damage can be fatal.

The injury shows up as gnarling and twisting of new stems, twisting and curling of the leaf petioles and cupping and distortions of the leaf.

Some home owners "double up" on fertilizers in spots where grass is hard to grow. Double application of fertilizer means doubling the amount of herbicide, Dr. Gouin reminds. This double concentration of herbicide near trees or shrubs increases the chances of injury.

If you do detect trees with herbicide injury, advise your customers to keep them well watered, especially during drought periods. Instruct them to fertilize the injured ornamental during the fall, winter or spring to restore plant vigor.



William Flemer, III, Princeton Nurseries, Princeton, N. J. was elected president of the American Association of Nurserymen during the association's annual convention in July. Flemer, who holds a master's degree in botany from Yale University, began in the family nursery in 1946. He has held numerous officer and committee posts in AAN. Among many offices held in nursery associations, he has been president of the following: New Jersey Association of Nurserymen (1959), Ornamental Growers Association (1958-59), National Association of Plant Patent Owners (1965), Eastern Regional Nurserymen's Association (1966).

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Another Way to Kill Cattails

I read with interest the paper on "How to Kill Cattails" by Bert Bordewick in the July issue. I thought your readers would like to know how the same problem was handled in Louisiana.

While looking for a synergistic agent to be used with 2,4-D in 1963, the writer found that the combination of glucose and the residual acids found in untreated blackstrap molasses seemed to serve the intended purpose.

(Blackstrap molasses is the residue from the manufacture of cane sugar.)

It was found that surface aquatic plants were more easily controlled by a mixture of the blackstrap molasses and the amine salt of 2,4-D. It was found also that this mixture was highly successful in controlling most of the submersed aquatic vegetation found in the area.

This information was given to the operators of Hodges Gardens near Many, La., and was used to clear the lagoons and ponds of the troublesome submersed plants. Cattails remained along the bankline.

A mixture of two gallons of untreated Louisiana blackstrap molasses and one gallon of the 40% amine salt of 2,4-D was added to 100 gallons of water and sprayed on the cattails with a conventional power sprayer until the plants were drenched.

It has now been reported to the writer that the unwanted cattails were completely destroyed.

—WILLIAM E. WUNDERLICH, Chief, Aquatic Growth Control Section (RET.), U.S. Engineer District, New Orleans.

Trimmings

CONSERVATIONISTS in New Jersey succeeded in banning the use of DDT against the gypsy moth, contending the chemical was a threat to wildlife. A recent aerial survey indicates that trees in some 38,190 acres in seven counties are now severely defoliated by the heaviest moth infestation in years. The problem is eight-fold worse than last year, says an agricultural department official. Defoliation in the same place next year, he added, will mean tree losses. Dead trees mean less food and shelter for wildlife, increased danger of fire and soil erosion from run-off flooding.

Nice going, conservationists. Your efforts may reap that silent spring, when no birds sing.

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NATURAL DESTRUCTIVE forces never let up, it seems. Mt. Vesuvius destroyed Pompeii, Italy, 2000 years ago. Still, the ruins have attracted historians and incalculable numbers of sightseers. A new threat is the destruction of even the ruins.

The threat is weeds, growing vigorously in the fertile volcanic soil. They fill every courtyard and every crack in masonry. Officials responsible for Italy's antiquities are deeply concerned because not enough funds are available to remove the weeds.

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GOING TO THE OPERA won't be the same next year in St. Louis. The stately, 60-ft. high elm that has graced the lower entrance of the Municipal Opera amphitheater area is dying. The 50-year-old tree is stricken with Dutch elm disease. When symptoms appeared last year, the tree was sprayed and holes were bored through nearby concrete walkways to permit force-feeding of its root system with liquid fertilizer. The operation was unsuccessful, and the tree will be removed at the end of the opera season.

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A FEDERAL NARCOTICS officer may be embarrassed over his ignorance of weeds, but the fellow who exposed him isn't laughing. A Cincinnati man allegedly got $300 from the federal agent for a supply of marijuana. He was arrested for selling narcotics, but a laboratory examination showed the "marijuana" was only dried garden weeds.

Instead of releasing the man, the charge was changed to larceny by trick. Though the weeds didn't include marijuana, there is a suggestion of sour grapes.