

# VEGETATION MANAGEMENT

By Roger Funk, Ph.D., Davey Tree Expert Co., Kent, Ohio

**Q:** What would you recommend as a good general herbicide for floating and submerged weeds in a pond?

**A:** Diquat and Aquathol are both recommended. I have not tried Aquathol, but have had good results with Diquat.

**A:** What turfgrass would you recommend for a low maintenance area where irrigation cannot be provided during drought periods?

**A:** Fine fescues are usually preferred in your area (northeast) although tall fescue also has good drought tolerance and will tolerate heat better than any of the other cool-season turfgrasses.

**Q:** What effect will Prime-a-Pell, a washing solution for buildings, have on plants? We maintain the plants around a building which is scheduled to be cleaned this summer.

**A:** I called Chemprobe Corp., manufacturers of the product, and was told that the petroleum-based solvents would have the same effect as gasoline. Their label states to protect plants and painted surfaces.

**Q:** How deep must a fill be before it will injure trees?

**A:** I would not attempt to even guess at a safe fill depth because of the number of variables that are involved in determining injury. Not only is the type and depth of soil important, but also the species, age, and condition of the trees.

Tree roots develop at certain depths in the soil because the oxygen level and other soil factors will support growth. If fill alters the soil environment, anaerobic conditions may result in root injury or death. Clay soils have the greatest potential for injury and reportedly have resulted in the death of sensitive trees at a fill depth of one inch.

**Q:** Which ground covers are recommended for areas too shady to grow turfgrass in the Northeastern area?

**A:** English ivy (*Hedera helix*), periwinkle (*Vinca minor*), wintercreeper (*Euonymus fortunei*), and Japanese spurge (*Pachysandra terminalis*) are recommended for shady areas.

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## Vegetation Management

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**Q:** What material can be used as a mosquito repellent on humans?

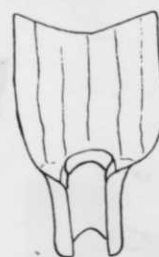
**A:** Commercial preparations containing diethyl-m-toluamide, diethyl phthalate, or diethyl carbate are the most effective. Outer garments can be treated with a preparation of one ounce benzyl benzoate (from drug store) to three pints water. Saturate all parts of the clothing, wring lightly, and dry thoroughly before wearing.

**Q:** What is the best way my men can tell nimblewill from bentgrass in clients' lawns?

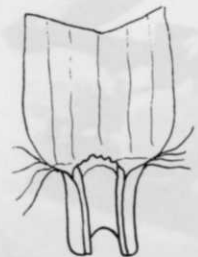
**A:** Both nimblewill and the bentgrasses have a membranous ligule. However, the ligule for nimblewill is short and jagged. Also, nimblewill has long hairs at the edges of the collar.



Colonial  
Bentgrass



Creeping  
Bentgrass



Nimblewill

**Q:** I have noticed that Bordeaux is gradually being replaced by other fungicides in most disease recommendations. What does Bordeaux contain and is it losing its effectiveness?

**A:** Bordeaux mixture is a mixture of copper sulfate and hydrated lime in water. The ratio is one pound copper sulfate, three pounds spray lime, 50 gallons water.

Bordeaux is available as a dry wettable powder and is more effective against many diseases but is being replaced with safer materials because of problems with plant injury and compatibility with other pesticides.

**Q:** What pre-emergent chemical can I use to control weeds in a bed that contains English ivy, pachysandra and myrtle?

**A:** The three ground covers you listed are tolerant to Betasan, Eptam and Ronstar.

Betasan is effective on annual grasses, especially crabgrass. Eptam will suppress nutsedge, quackgrass and certain broadleaf weeds, although it will not give as long-lasting control as many other herbicides. Ronstar will control many annual grasses and broadleaf weeds.

Read the labels for more specific information, including application instructions.

**Send your question or comments to: Vegetation Management c/o WEEDS TREES & TURF, 9800 Detroit Ave., Cleveland, OH 44102. Leave at least two months for Roger Funk's response in this column.**