

# LANDSCAPE LOG

by the Editorial Advisory Board, Weeds Trees & Turf

## The gun sounds in April

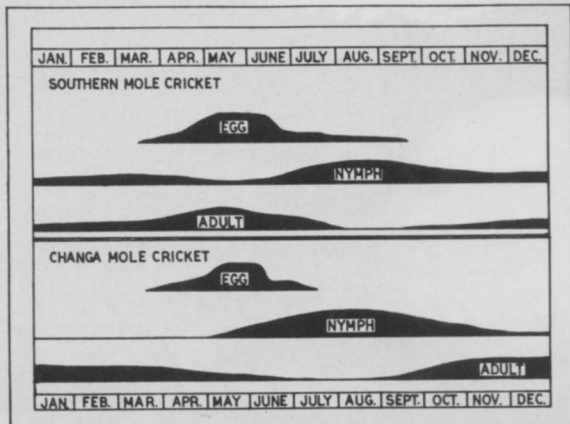
The gun sounds in April for nearly every landscape manager in North America.

**Southern landscape managers** say so long to ryegrass and hello to bermuda, centipede, St. Augustine, and bahiagrass.

April is one of the driest times of the year in Florida says Bruce Augustin. Irregularities in irrigation become evident and are sometimes confused as insect problems.

Mole crickets and chinchbugs are actively causing damage to turf. Contact insecticides, such as Mocap, Orthene, and Oftanol are useful for mole cricket control. Augustin recommends only curative control for chinchbugs with Dursban. Where resistance is recognized, switch to Pydrin or Baygon.

Golf course superintendents have begun



**Mole cricket adults** are active in April. Adults controlled early in April or late March will be prevented from laying eggs.

postemergence weed control and aeration programs.

Southern home lawns should be verticut if thatchy in April. Augustin recommends delaying herbicide applications until later in the month, but fertilizer should go down early in the month (feed first, weed later after grass is actively growing).

**In the Northeast** after crocuses break through the frosty ground, forsythia and redbud blossom, and spring rains arrive, turf diseases, including leaf spot, stripe smut, and red thread become active.

Preemergence herbicides should be down, unless major reseeding is planned. Fertilizer and soil amendments can be applied to correct pH, soil texture, and nutrient levels. Iron has become a popular soil amendment lately.

White grubs, chinchbugs, billbugs, and black turfgrass ateniens controls should be applied where these insects were a problem last year.

Trees are breaking dormancy. They should be in place with perhaps a final pruning to remove winter damage made obvious by lack of buds or foliage. Trees and shrubs should be fed after flowering.

Preventative treatments for apple scab, fire blight, anthracnose, and leaf spot should be made where a problem. In areas where buds have not broken, a final oil spray for scale is possible.

Forsythia and other early bloomers can be pruned back after flowering for shape and size. Rhododendron should be fertilized with an acidic fertilizer. Mulched areas should be cleaned up and dead and possibly diseased twigs and foliage removed. Renew mulch to two-inch depth.

**In the Great Plains** Bob Shearman recommends aeration and irrigation system testing. Final equipment checks should be made and the replacement part inventory replenished.

In late April, bluegrass billbugs become active. Treat where necessary. Fertilize turf if not fertilized late last fall. Begin broadleaf herbicide applications late in the month after preemergence crabgrass and spurge control early in the month. Leaf spot, melting out, and stripe smut diseases may require treatment.

Ornamentals susceptible to fire blight should receive streptomycin sulfate applications as they bloom. In late April, pines may require fungicide treatments for Diplodia tip blight and sycamores for anthracnose. Apple scab treatments should begin in April.

Editorial Advisory Board members are: **Bruce J. Augustin**, extension turf and water specialist, University of Florida, Fort Lauderdale FL; **Douglas Chapman**, horticulturist/director, Dow Gardens, Midland, MI; **Kent Kurtz**, professor of horticulture, California Polytechnic Institute, Pomona, CA; **Harry Niemczyk**, professor of entomology, Ohio State University, Wooster, OH; **Martin Petrovic**, assistant professor of turfgrass science, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY; and **Robert Shearman**, associate professor of turf, University of Nebraska, Lincoln, NE.

