

PROBLEM SOLVERS

by Balakrishna Rao, Ph.D.

Privet hedge problems

Problem: Every year the privet hedges show grayish-colored leaves. Eventually they become yellow. It looks like insect damage. Any idea what it might be and what can be sprayed to protect them? (New York)

Solution: From the symptoms you are describing, the dendrothrips problem seems to be related to privet thrips (*Dendrothrips ornatus*). In some years, this pest can become very serious. Affected plants show a grayish, dusty appearance. The larvae are yellow and spindle-shaped; the adults are dark brown to black with a bright red band.

Spray with a mixture of malathion and Sevin twice at 14-day intervals when the thrips are first noticed. Fertilize and water the plants as needed to improve their vitality.

Dog repellents

Problem: Are there any chemicals which can be applied on humans to repel dogs? (Canada)

Solution: I am not familiar with any products on the market which can be used as repellents against dogs. Reports indicate that moth balls can be used on bushes to distract male dogs. It would be nice to have some repellent to distract dogs from chasing while providing service in the yard. Maybe some of our readers may respond to this question.

Sequestrene use on lawns

Problem: Can we use Sequestrene on St. Augustinegrass and bermudagrass lawns to supply iron? What is the rate? (Texas)

Solution: Yes, you can use Sequestrene on St. Augustinegrass and bermudagrass lawns to supply iron. Use at 1/2 lb. per 1,000 sq. ft. This is an expensive material compared to other products on the market.

Control of scale insects

Problem: On our clients' properties we see a number of different kinds of scale insects on different plants. What is the best control method? Is it possible to control all of them by applying one chemical at one time? (Michigan)

Solution: In general, the best management approach to scale insect problems is to apply dormant oil against overwintering scales followed by a chemical application later when the crawlers are seen.

Scale insect problems are difficult to manage. Most overwintering scale insects can be managed to some extent by the application of dormant oil alone or in combination with ethion before bud break in the spring.

The timing is not dependent upon the species of

scale insect. The crawler emergence of these scale insects, however, may vary from species to species. Accordingly, the chemical application time should coincide with specific crawler emergence. Therefore, one application of a given insecticide will not be able to provide control of various scale insects.

The best approach is to identify the scale insect, determine the crawler emergence period, and apply a crawler control spray as a follow up to a dormant oil spray. Dormant oil can be phytotoxic to some species. Read and follow label directions.

Solving the weedy infield

Problem: After our softball and baseball fields were built, they were left unattended for two years. Now we have many weeds growing in the infields. During original seeding part of the infields was sown. What would be the best way to get rid of the problem? (Minnesota)

Solution: First, you need to determine which types of weeds are causing your problems. Use a pre-emergence herbicide to manage annual grassy weeds like crabgrass.

Make sure that the application is done about two to three weeks before the predicted crabgrass germination period in early spring. After the herbicide application the area should not be disturbed, which would break the chemical barrier and result in weed problems.

For broadleaf weeds, post-emergence herbicides should be applied when weeds are actively growing. If you are dealing with mostly rosette-types of weeds (e.g. dandelions), a herbicide containing 2,4-D with MCPP is sufficient.

In most cases, an application in April and again in October is necessary. Creeping or vining weeds like knotweed require dicamba for adequate control. From late spring through early fall, whenever the weeds are actively growing, apply a herbicide containing 2,4-D, MCPP, and dicamba.

This combination will not take care of all the weeds. Weeds like veronica, violet, and ground ivy are difficult to control with the normal application of amine formulations. These weeds can best be managed by the use of products containing ester formulations of 2,4-D and/or triclopyr.



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Questions should be mailed to Problem Solver, Weeds Trees & Turf, 7500 Old Oak Boulevard, Cleveland, OH 44130. Please allow 2-3 months for an answer to appear in the magazine.