

PROBLEM MANAGEMENT

by Balakrishna Rao, Ph.D.

Grassy weeds in flower beds

Problem: Can you recommend both pre- and post-emergence herbicides for controlling grassy weeds (chiefly crabgrass and foxtail, but some turfgrass invasion as well) which can safely be used in beds containing iris, hemerocallis, hosta and crocus? We are concerned that these ornamentals may be sensitive to Poast, Fusilade, etc. (Illinois)

Solution: Several pre-emergence herbicides can be used to manage crabgrass and foxtail. Some examples are Betasan (Lescosan), Dacthal, Enide, Eptam, Furloe, Chloro IPC, Goal + Surflan, Surflan or Treflan. These products are recommended to control weeds in annual and perennial flowers. Some of the products may be safe to use on certain flowers, while other products may not.

The manner in which these herbicides should be applied varies from product to product. Since you are dealing with several bulb crops, use of products like Betasan (Lescosan) with fairly broad crop tolerance, should provide satisfactory control of crabgrass and/or foxtail. Use the granular form and incorporate, and irrigate after application. This is most effective against annual grasses.

Post-emergence herbicides are not generally recommended for use in annual and perennial flowers. Most post-emergence herbicides like Roundup, Amitrol, Dowpon and Poast are non-selective materials. Read and follow label specifications for best results.

Telling a tree's age

Problem: Is there a quick method of determining the age of trees? We are dealing with a property consisting of a mixture of sugar maple, black cherry, elm, hickory, walnut, which are believed to be of historical value. (Michigan)

Solution: One method to determine a tree's age is to take a core boring and count the annual rings. However, this method takes time and may be injurious to a tree. Reports from expert arborists have shown that there is a positive correlation between tree girth and tree age. Growth rate, however, varies from species to species. Tree health, soil, climatic and site conditions can have a significant effect on the rate of annual growth.

The tree's age can be fairly estimated using a simple formula published by the International Society of Arboriculture. First, determine tree diameter in inches measured at 4½ feet above ground level. The diameter can be determined by dividing the circumference by 3.14. Refer to the following table to find different factors for various species. Multiply the diameter in inches by the designated factor to determine the estimated age of trees.

Tree species, variety or cultivar	Factor
<i>Abies concolor</i> -White fir	7½
<i>Acer campestre</i> -Hedge maple	4
<i>Acer nigrum</i> -Black maple	5

<i>Acer platanoides</i> -Norway maple	4½
<i>Acer rubrum</i> -Red maple	4½
<i>Acer saccharinum</i> -Silver maple	3
<i>Acer saccharum</i> -Sugar maple	5½
<i>Aesculus hippocastanum</i> -Common horse chestnut	8
<i>Aesculus octandra</i> -Yellow buckeye	5
<i>Betula nigra</i> -River birch	3½
<i>Betula pendula</i> -White birch	5
<i>Carya ovata</i> -Shagbark hickory	7½
<i>Fagus grandifolia</i> -American beech	6
<i>Fagus sylvatica</i> -European beech	4
<i>Fraxinus americana</i> -White ash	5
<i>Fraxinus pennsylvanica lanceolata</i> -Green ash	4
<i>Gymnocladus dioicus</i> -Kentucky coffeetree	3
<i>Juglans nigra</i> -Eastern black walnut	4½
<i>Liquidambar styraciflua</i> -Sweetgum	4
<i>Liriodendron tulipifera</i> -Tuliptree	3
<i>Picea abies</i> -Norway spruce	5
<i>Picea pungens</i> "Glauca"-Blue Colorado spruce	4½
<i>Pinus nigra</i> -Austrian pine	4½
<i>Pinus resinosa</i> -Red pine	5½
<i>Pinus strobus</i> -White pine	5
<i>Pinus sylvestris</i> -Scot pine	3½
<i>Platanus occidentalis</i> -American sycamore	4
<i>Prunus serotina</i> -Black cherry	5
<i>Pseudotsuga menziesii</i> -Douglas fir	5
<i>Pyrus calleryana</i> "Bradford"-Bradford pear	3
<i>Quercus alba</i> -White oak	5
<i>Quercus coccinea</i> -Scarlet oak	4
<i>Quercus imbricaria</i> -Shingle oak	6
<i>Quercus palustris</i> -Pin oak	3
<i>Quercus rubra</i> -Northern red oak	4
<i>Quercus shumardii</i> -Shumard oak	3
<i>Tilia cordata</i> -Little leaf European linden	3
<i>Ulmus americana</i> -American elm	4



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