

ASK THE EXPERT

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Eliminating weeds in walkways

Problem: What can be used to manage weeds in cracks of driveways and sidewalks? (Ohio)

Solution: To manage existing weeds, a non-selective herbicide like Roundup is needed. To manage the future weeds from seeds, a pre-emergence herbicide like Surflan is needed. Therefore, if the weeds are already present, use a combination of Surflan plus Roundup. Avoid spraying or contacting any of the non-target, desirable plants, because Roundup can affect any plants it contacts.

Many weed seeds can remain viable in soil for 10-20 years; therefore, repeat applications may be needed after the residual effect of the pre-emergence herbicide is gone.

Read and follow label specifications for better results.

Soil test needed on new sod farm?

Problem: I am starting a sod farm. I've been told I don't need to test my soil; just use fertilizer containing trace minerals, etc. What do you think? (New York)

Solution: The best time to apply pH-correcting materials and immobile fertilizers such as phosphorus is before establishment. Only a soil test can determine the proper amount to apply for your soil conditions.

Pine bark beetles out in force

Problem: We are experiencing a pine bark beetle problem. We feel it is the Ips beetle. From our literature, we were unable to find any recommendations to manage these insects. Is there anything we can do to protect the healthy trees? (New York)

Solution: We have been getting many calls regarding pine bark beetle problems this year compared to past years. This is believed to be due to the exposure of these plants to moisture stress during the 1988 drought and again this year. These weakened trees are susceptible to beetle attack.

Ips beetle is one of the major insect problems reported from many parts of the northeastern states. To provide proper management, make sure that you are dealing with Ips beetle. Contact your local cooperative extension service to help identify the pest.

Ohio State University publications suggest the use of insecticides such as Dursban 4E (2 gal./100), or Dursban 50WP (16.5 lb./100 gal.); Lindane (20 percent liquid 3 gal./100 gal.) or Sevin SL (4 gal./100). They suggest treating the trunk surfaces when adults are active.

Engraver beetles (Ips beetles) may require several seasonal treatments. Healthy trees are usually not attacked. Spray trunks one to four times at one month intervals beginning in mid-May. In the North, Ips beetle has more than one generation, therefore

at least two treatments should be made—one in late May and again in late July.

Since there are no treatments found in Cornell University publications, check with your cooperative extension service personnel.

Infested trees should be promptly removed. Bury, de-bark or burn cut logs to prevent further spread of these insects. Provide proper watering, fertilizing, mulching and pest management as needed to help improve plant health.

Read and follow label specifications for better results.

Treating for millipedes

Problem: How do I eliminate millipedes around homes? (Michigan)

Solution: Millipedes are generally a nuisance pest. They are normally found outdoors in damp places under leaves and mulch. But sometimes they invade homes, particularly ground floors. Unlike centipedes, millipedes have round bodies and two pairs of legs for almost each body segment.

Since millipedes take their shelter under debris near home foundations, sanitizing by maintaining clean surroundings and/or hand picking is one way to manage them. If the population is too high for mechanical methods, apply insecticides such as malathion, Dursban or Sevin.

Read and follow label specifications for better results.

Managing Euonymus scale.

Problem: What is the best way to manage scales on Euonymus? The plant is severely covered with scales and leaves are showing yellowish discoloration. Are they worth keeping? (Ohio)

Solution: To manage Euonymus scales, use 2 percent Superior horticultural oil as a dormant treatment in the spring.

When the crawlers are emerging, usually around late May through mid-June, use insecticides such as malathion, Orthene, Dursban or Sevin and repeat two more times at 10-day intervals.

If the scale activity continues, repeat treatments as needed.

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Questions should be mailed to ASK THE EXPERT, LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT, 7500 Old Oak Boulevard, Cleveland, OH 44130. Please allow 2 to 3 months for an answer to appear in the magazine.