

HOT TOPICS

Landscaper unearths ancient bones

Illinois State Museum identifies dinosaur remains.

WADSWORTH, Ill.—Van Zelst Landscaping turned preservation of a wetland area into a national news event when mastodon bones and tusks were discovered in the excavation to expand a small marsh into a larger lake.

The 10,000-year-old bones were discovered along with the remains of an ancient spruce forest which existed on the site during the Ice Age, according to David Van Zelst.

The bones, tusks, shells and spruce tree trunks were found on Van Zelst's property as it was expanding a tree nursery site and excavating a three-acre lake to provide for a continuous source of water.

The first piece of bone excavators came upon was almost four feet long with a cross section of about 4-by-7 inches. What appeared to be a tree stump was the femur (right thigh bone) of a prehistoric American mastodon.

Van Zelst contacted the Illinois State Museum in Springfield. A team of scientists led by Dr. Russell Graham, curator of geology, arrived the next day. Graham identified the bone as part of the beast which stood 10 feet tall at the shoulders and weighed up to six tons.

A section of tusk ivory about 24 inches long was also found, along with the remains of a grove of spruce trees believed to be about 11,000 years old. Tree trunks and white spruce seed cones are neither decomposed nor petrified. After carbon-14 dating and tree ring studies, these specimens are expected to tell the history, climatic and season conditions at the time of growth. Pollen studies are also being made.



Van Zelst with a hunk of a mastodon's thigh bone originally thought to be a tree trunk. He found it in a 15-foot-deep excavation in Wadsworth, Ill.

Ban pesticides in refuges? It's not an issue, say feds

WASHINGTON—Pesticide use could be banned in all of the U.S. National Wildlife Refuge System.

That's one suggestion of several environmental impact "alternatives" being considered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS).

Some of these alternatives will likely be incorporated into a new management plan for the refuge system later this year—but only after the FWS weighs input from a series of public hearings.

Most comment from the public so far has been from hunting, trapping and fishing interests seeking continued access to federal lands.

Pesticide use on federal refuges is, to date, not a burning issue, apparently because of the FWS's use and oft-repeated endorsement of integrated pest management (IPM) practices.

Several FWS "alternatives" would continue to allow pesticide use on national properties, but only in IPM programs.

Actually, pesticide use on national refuge property has dropped dramatically since 1974 anyway—about 40 percent in 20 years, claims the FWS.

In 1989 the FWS says it used pesticides in 61 refuges, on 202,000 of a possible 90 million acres in the national refuge system.

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Ongoing debate continues: posting for D-I-Yers or not?

MARYSVILLE, Ohio—The debate continues over whether do-it-yourselfers (in most cases, homeowners) should have to post lawn pesticide applications in the same manner that their professional counterparts must, in many areas of the U.S.

The most recent opinion was received at LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT in a letter from Dr. Michael P. Kelty, vice president of research and development for The Scotts Co. Here is what Dr. Kelty wrote:

"As the nation's largest supplier of do-it-yourself lawn and garden products, The Scott Company agrees that homeowners have every right to be fully informed of the products and services they purchase. We are opposed to mandatory D-I-Y posting and pre-notification, however, and present the following as support:

- "Products registered for residential application by LCOs or D-I-Yers are, to my knowledge, all 'General Unrestricted Use' products. This is EPA's most benign risk

category. Our experience in nearly 100 years of supplying the turfgrass market shows that EPA's classification scheme is appropriate.

- "D-I-Y consumers receive an EPA-approved and/or a state-approved label for the fertilizer and pesticide products they purchase. These labels fully disclose the product contents, etc. In the case of The Scotts Company (and other D-I-Y suppliers), a toll-free number is provided on all product packages so that assistance from trained technicians is readily available. To my knowledge, LCOs are not required to provide similar product/service disclosures under FIFRA, but several states do have disclosure standards.

- "With a good history of safe use and with a federally-mandated disclosure system already in place, we feel that posting and pre-notification for D-I-Y products is superfluous. Further, a consumer posting and pre-notification system is impractical

to implement and virtually impossible to enforce.

- "D-I-Y consumers continue to reside in the neighborhood after they've applied their products. It seems to me that a neighbor who wants to be notified of product application will receive that information more effectively by knocking on his/her neighbor's door than by instituting a costly and unnecessary consumer posting and pre-notification system.

"Scotts strongly endorses freedom of choice. If LCOs, notably the Professional Lawn Care Association of America, feel that posting and pre-notification laws are appropriate, they should be free to pursue them. It does not logically follow, however, that LCOs' endorsement of these laws makes them appropriate for consumers.

"Consumers should continue to have the choice of D-I-Y or LCO. Neither method is toxicologically or environmentally better, but a simple matter of choosing what is the best value for each individual. Both application methods and their related products have a role to play in serving customers."



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Is sulfur listing needed for 'complete' nutrition?

OVERLAND PARK, Kans.—The current definition of macro-nutrients (aside from C-H-O) for turfgrass fertilization consists of nitrogen, potassium and phosphorus, and represents those elements historically accepted as required for a "complete" fertilizer.

In this letter to **LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT**, Dan Nason, marketing manager for potash products at Great Salt Lake Minerals Corp. here, thinks another should be added:

"As a turfgrass specialist for the past 15 years, I have been interested in the nutritional needs of turfgrass in order to maintain optimal health and minimize the negative impacts of a wide array of stressful situations.

"I suggest that in the specific case of turfgrass nutrition, there are four—not three—primary nutrients which are critical to the healthy completion of the normal life cycle. *Sulfur* should be the fourth

major nutrient required of turf fertilizers before they should be termed 'complete.'

"Sulfur is usually found in tissue analyses of healthy turfgrass in amounts greater than that of phosphorus. Sulfur in the plant-available sulfate form is also generally much more lacking in most soils than are the other two 'secondary nutrients,' calcium and magnesium.

"The nutritional value of sulfur in turfgrasses has been overshadowed for far too long by sulfur's use as a soil amendment to modify soil pH, yet sulfur is responsible for a great number of plant processes of particular importance to turfgrasses versus other crops. Sulfur is a major factor in turf's ability to provide for improved drought tolerance, winter hardiness, color and density; this is in addition to its important role in many metabolic functions which are commonly accepted as beneficial for other plant groups.

"Turfgrass management and so turfgrass fertilizers have evolved as an offshoot from strictly agricultural models. Maybe it's time we turfgrass managers recognize and treat turfgrasses as the unique 'crops' they are.

"The N-P-K-S designation for a 'complete' turf-type fertilizer will be of far more value to serious turf nutritionists. Consumers also should have every right to expect the 'complete' fertilizer they buy for lawn is just that: complete with the four basic nutrients most important and most often found lacking for optimum turfgrass health and nutrition."

IN COMING MONTHS:

JULY

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AUGUST

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SEPTEMBER

Buyer's Guide



THE WORST PART ISN'T

THAT SHE'S CALLED BACK

THREE TIMES, OR THAT

SHE PROBABLY WON'T RENEW.

THE WORST PART IS THAT

SHE'S GOT NEIGHBORS.

If she's calling you about grubs, fire ants, or mole crickets, you can bet her neighbors are hearing about you, too.

Makes you wish you'd used Triumph®, doesn't it? You could have delivered up to 90% control in just 2 to 3 days. Too bad.

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