

## Rounding up weeds

*How do we get rid of weeds in an established evergreen planting nursery? We have been using Princep as a pre-emergence herbicide and Roundup as a post-emergent during autumn or winter. We are controlling grassy weeds fairly well with the pre-emergents, but for the broadleaves we have to use the Roundup. Any suggestions to improve the result would be appreciated.*

—OHIO

For evergreen plantings, you could use pre-emergence herbicides such as Princep, Casaron, Kerb, Devrinol, Gallery or Snapshot. Gallery and Snapshot have pre-emergence activity on broadleaf weeds as well and grassy weeds.

For post-emergence control, you can spot-treat with herbicides such as Roundup, Finale or Scythe (a fatty-acid-based herbicide). Finale would be slightly quicker-acting than Roundup. Scythe will help manage the top part of a contacted weed with a quick knockdown and burning effect. However, weeds can resprout from the underground parts. Since you are familiar with Roundup, continue using that and try the other products on a small scale and learn how to use them in your weed management program.

Treat annual and perennial grasses when they are actively growing. Most broadleaf perennials are managed more effectively in late summer or early autumn.

Remember that the post-emergence herbicides mentioned above are all non-selective, so they can injure any green plants that they contact. Therefore, be careful when using around desirable plants. Similarly, after treating an area, do not walk in that area and then walk on desirable turfgrass. This may produce what I call a "footprint blight" by injuring the turfgrass if these herbicides are tracked by shoe.

Read and follow label specifications for best results.

## Mulch mildew coats siding

*We see mildew appearing on bright surfaces such as white aluminum siding. We were told that lawns can develop a mildew problem, and the spores can make their way to these surfaces. Is there any non-toxic treatment for this problem, or any lawn-mowing precautions that can minimize it?*

—ILLINOIS

The problem is related to a artillery fungus, *sphaerobolus stellatus*.

It is generally not a lawn problem, but is commonly found on mulches around homes.

The fungus grows on well-rotted wood such as the wood chips used as foundation bed mulches.

The fungus is frequently found around shady, moist areas. It is also found on old greenhouse benches and indoor mulched potted plants. After establishing in the mulched

area, the fungus produces fruiting bodies which are 1 to 2 mm in diameter and slightly raised to globular in shape. The outer cover of this spore-bearing fruiting body is brown, and it becomes darker with age. These fruiting bodies contain spore masses called glebal masses (peridiole), which can be expelled with force. Upon release the glebal masses will be forcibly spattered onto nearby house siding and draperies, walls and windows in the green houses. From a distance, they may look like some insect or mite pest.

There is no chemical treatments that can manage the problem. Consider washing the affected house siding with house siding washing soap.

As far as mowing, I would not be concerned about this fungus since it establishes primarily on decomposing wood. Those who are allergic to some secondary fungi growing on mulch or compost may want to keep away from this area.

The fungus doesn't produce fruiting bodies above 25° C, therefore, the problem is limited to spring and fall. If the problem persists, it is a good idea to remove the existing mulch and replace it with better mulch. Scraping the tiny black spore structures from home siding is very difficult and may not eliminate the problem, because the spore masses reportedly are viable up to 11 years. **LM**



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