

Dicot weeds

In a universe of hundreds of dicot weeds, a limited number can tolerate repeated mowing of managed turf sites. In order to provide a broader representation of turf weeds, we have included a select number of these dicot weeds. Those presented herein were chosen for their ability to survive in turf, often as a continuing pest. Several of the species can persist even at fairly short mowing heights; others are active in cool weather.

Identifying a dicot weed

Unlike the prototypical size and shape of monocot weeds, the shape and vegetative growth habits of many dicot weed groups are visually unique. Also, the distinctive traits of monocots—seedheads, ligules and collars—are not always present, making visual identification more important.

We suggest the following process for identifying dicot weeds:

- Look for a sample flower if available
- Leaves: check for identifying characteristics (size, shape, notches, venation or coloration)
- Stems: check how the leaves are held (opposite or alternate), shape and color
- Flowers: check color, size and composition (single, double or compound)
- Location: take note of the conditions in which the weed is growing (shade, compacted soil, etc.)
- Distribution: confirm that this weed species has been identified in your state

DANDELION

aka *common dandelion*

A large rosette-type perennial herb

Leaves growing from plant base are long, narrow and deeply notched

Points of leaf lobes point backward toward base of plant

Has large, slightly mounded yellow flowers on hollow stems

Mature seedhead is a round puffball with seeds that are easily dislodged



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HENBIT

aka *dead-nettle*

A mostly erect winter annual or biennial

Leaves are similar to mint: rounded, toothed, heavily veined with soft hairs on top, held opposite on square stems

Single flowers are trumpet-shaped, pale purple and project from ends of stems

Seen primarily in spring, dying with heat



KNOTWEED

aka *prostrate knotweed*

- A persistent low-growing summer annual

- Prefers compacted soil of pathways and along drives


- Leaves are blue-green, up to 1 inch long and 1/4-inch wide

- Small single white to pink flowers are found at the junction of the leaves and the stem




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DICOTS

PURSLANE

aka *common purslane*

A prostrate, succulent summer annual

Leaves are shiny green, wedge-shaped, thick and up to 1 inch long

Stems are thick, fleshy and purple to brown in color

Plants are very drought-resistant

Small, single yellow flowers may appear in the leaf clusters at end of stems



COMMON CHICKWEED

aka *starwort, winterweed*

A low-growing winter annual

Plant prefers shaded moist sites

Opposite small leaves are carried on tender stems

Stems may root at leaf nodes

Small compound flower composed of 5 pairs of two pale purple petals

Plants die back with summer heat, but can survive year round at cool sites



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SPOTTED SPURGE

A prostrate fleshy summer annual herb

Leaves are opposite, oblong, and up to ¾-inch long


Upper leaf surface has a purple to brown blotch along center vein

Hairy stems produce a milky-white sap when broken



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