

Va. buttonweed in bentgrass, fescue

Virginia buttonweed has become established on bentgrass skirts and fescue fairways on our golf course. We applied Confront to areas around the green; it appeared to have killed the weed, but one year later we noticed it had returned. In addition, Confront killed the bentgrass. We have tried weeding, but with little effect. Nothing has been applied to fescue areas fearing that the applied product may kill the grass there also. And these areas have a great deal of Virginia buttonweed.

—KENTUCKY



BALAKRISHNA RAO

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The confront herbicide is labeled for use on both bentgrass and fescue. It is a postemergent herbicide. In my opinion, it helps manage the Virginia buttonweed present at the time of application. Recognize the fact that this is a difficult weed to manage. Often, repeat applications at two- to three-week intervals may be needed to help manage this weed.

You say that you noticed weeds a year later. It is possible that the new weeds might have appeared from seeds which can remain viable for 10-15 years in the soil. New seeds can also be introduced from adjacent areas.

Since Confront is labeled for bentgrass use at 1 pt./acre, it is unlikely that is caused this problem at the recommended rate. However, if it was not used according to label guidelines, problems may occur.

Check your records for mixing and gallonage application

rates. The bentgrass kill you mentioned also could be related to a disease like Pythium blight or some insect damage.

As far as fescue, you may be referring to coarse fescue or tall fescue. Confront is also labeled for use on fescue. There should not be any problem if it is used according to label guidelines.

Tall fescue clumps a problem

How late can we apply Lesco-TFC to manage tall fescue as a weed in Kentucky bluegrass lawns?

—PENNSYLVANIA

A Lesco representative says Lesco-TFC herbicide can be applied as long as the soil is not frozen. After treatments are applied, tall fescue plants may not show severe declining symptoms or die during the fall season of the treated year. Instead, the tall fescue plants usually disappear the following spring. Reports indicate that fall applications are better than spring because during the fall season root absorption increases.

Also, tall fescue would be more susceptible to TFC herbicide because of decreasing temperature.

Treating tall fescue in the fall can allow Kentucky bluegrass and other desirable turfgrasses to fill in during spring.

Avoid treating areas that have ryegrass as a component of turfgrass in the lawn. Lesco-TFC herbicide will remove perennial ryegrass from Kentucky bluegrass.

Another option for the tall fescue clumps is to dig them

out. These areas can then be seeded with certified seed mixes. Where this is not practical and chemical approach is highly desirable.

Read and follow label specifications for better results.

Tree soil compaction

Older trees on the town commons are suffering from years of soil compaction. What can we do?

—OHIO

There are only a few things that can be done to relieve compacted soils. Where practical, try to correct compaction with hydraulic pressure. Soil injecting, root feeding tools can be used. The key is to get the water pressure deep into the root zone to break up the compacted soil. In most situations, the active roots of plants will be in the top 18-24 inches.

Another approach is to drill vertical holes in the ground using a soil auger and filling them with loose amendments like mulch or peat moss. If poor drainage appears to be a problem, filling these holes with pea gravel would be useful. Reports also indicate that radial trenching within the dripline of trees and filling with amendments will allow good drainage and aeration for the root systems.

The best way is to recognize the potential for compaction from traffic or construction, and provide corrective measures and treatments before the anticipated compaction occurs. **LM**

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