

ask the expert

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Newly seeded lawns

In early spring, we seed lawns, then have the problem of using pre-emergent herbicides to manage annual grassy weeds. What are our choices? Can we use Drive herbicide on these newly seeded lawns?

— OHIO

Depending upon the situation, you may be able to use some herbicides such as Tupersan or Drive.

Siduron (Tupersan) can be used on newly seeded turfgrass any time without a problem.

Quinclorac (Drive) can be used when the newly seeded turfgrass has germinated and been mowed about three times. Reports indicate that Drive can be safely applied on perennial rye or tall fescue lawns any time. On Kentucky bluegrass, the treatment should be delayed for about 28 to 30 days after the seeds germinate. Avoid treating fine fescue lawns with Drive herbicide.

Reports indicate that Drive herbicide will perform well when the crabgrass is at the two- to three-leaf stage. Once the crabgrass begins to tiller, the efficacy of Drive will be reduced. Therefore, use Drive before tillering.

Sod webworms

We have found different kinds of sod webworms in lawns. Are there many kinds? If so, what are they and how are they managed?

— VIRGINIA

In reviewing some literature on sod web-

worms, I found that there are at least 14 species associated with turfgrass in Virginia. This includes *Pediasia trisecta*, *Parapediasia teterrella*, *Parapediasia decorella*, *Crambus laqueatellus*, *Crambus leachellus*, *Agriphila ruricolella*, *Microcrambus elegans*, *Urola nivalis*, *Crambus praefectellus*, *Pediasia luteolella*, *Pediasia caliginosella*, *Agriphila vulgigavella*, *Crambus agitatellus* and *Crambus perlellus*. Only a few of these, such as *P. teterrella*, *N. elegans* and *P. trisecta*, are found mostly during spring and summer.

P. teterrella has two generations per year. Adults are seen during the second week of June and the first week of August. Larvae are found during the middle of July and early September.

M. elegans has two generations per year. Adults are seen during the third week of June and the end of August. Larvae are seen during July and October.

Trisecta has two to three generations. Adult moths are found during the second week of June and the end of July. The larvae are found during the second week of July and the end of August.

Sod webworm activity periods vary in different parts of Virginia. Consider monitoring them using black light traps to determine their activity periods in a specific area. Even though their activity period is slightly different, their life cycle is similar. For example, *P. teterrella* adults begin to appear around the first week of May. They are active during dusk, flying a short distance and folding their wings when at rest. They mate two to three days after emerging, and eggs are laid in about two weeks.

Generally, the ideal time to apply treatments would be when you see adults flying

over lawns in a zig-zag pattern at dusk time. At this time, the females, who can produce 200 eggs in a lifetime, drop eggs on lawns. After about six days, eggs hatch into tiny caterpillars.

During the day, the caterpillars hide in silken cocoons in thatch. At night, they come out and feed at the base of tillers. These chewing insects leave their excrement and small patches of dead grass that appear to be scalped. The latter may resemble green pellets, which later turn brown as they age. These, along with silken cocoons and scalping-type feeding, are helpful in diagnosing sod webworm problems.

The larval stages may last for 50 days. They overwinter as fully grown caterpillars, then become pupae in the thatch. Pupae become adults in about seven days during spring and summer.

Sod webworm caterpillars chew at the base of tillers and generally don't kill the turf. Therefore, if the infestation is light with the onset of cool and moist weather, turf should recover as long as the crown is not dead for some other reason. If the problem is severe, applications of insecticides such as Dursban, Diazinon, Sevin, Talstar, Scimitar, DeltaGard, Conserve, M-Pede or Tempo should help manage the problem.

Read and follow label specifications for best results.



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SEND YOUR QUESTIONS TO: "Ask the Expert" Landscape Management, 7500 Old Oak Blvd., Cleveland, OH 44130, or email: sgibson@advanstar.com. Please allow two to three months for an answer to appear.