



**BUCKEYE
ECOCARE®**

Early Spring



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"Green is the soul of Spring. Summer may be dappled with yellow, Autumn with orange and Winter with white, but Spring is drenched with the color green."

*~ Paul F. Kortepeter,
Tea with Victoria Rose*

Indeed, green is the undisputed color of spring. It's omnipresence is the product of brighter sun, longer days, and warmer weather. As we embark on the greenest season of all, it is a good time to consider the health of the biggest source of that color: our lawns. When spring breathes new life into our landscapes, it unfortunately also revives unwanted, invasive weeds. Crabgrass in particular can infiltrate a lawn and cause considerable headaches. In this issue, we delve into the crabgrass menace and explore ways to avoid it.

Hopefully you're as excited as we are about this season of growth. It is truly amazing to see Mother Nature awake from her slumber right before our eyes. As the outdoors beckon, we want to help your lawn reach its full potential – so let us know what we can do!



Crabgrass: A Hearty Adversary

While the new life and new growth of spring is both encouraging and exciting, some of this new growth is more than we asked for. Crabgrass is a particularly widespread and vigorous annual grassy weed that can take over large portions of your lawn if left untreated. Originally brought to America as a forage grass for livestock in the 19th century, crabgrass has become a constant enemy of lawns and landscaping.

What makes crabgrass particularly challenging is that it spreads easily and can grow in extreme conditions. Owing to its African origins, crabgrass can survive in very hot and dry conditions. Essentially, conditions in which turfgrass struggles, crabgrass thrives. To make matters worse, crabgrass is built to spread far and wide. One single clump of crabgrass can yield 150,000 seeds! Not only are these seeds plentiful, but like the plant itself, they are hearty. Crabgrass seeds can lay dormant in the ground for years and still emerge as viable plants once conditions are conducive for germination. Crabgrasses' durability and propensity to spread make it a threat to lawns everywhere.

Combatting such a tough customer requires a multi-faceted battle plan. Herbicide treatments go a long way in slowing the spread of crabgrass,

but full eradication also requires ongoing attention towards the general health of your lawn. Both pre- and post-emergent herbicides can be useful against crabgrass. Here are a few things to keep in mind for each:

PRE-EMERGENTS:

- Apply to entire turf area early in the season before crabgrass has sprouted.
- Pre-emergents create a barrier that must be maintained if they are to be effective. Avoid heavy raking, de-thatching, or any other soil disruptions in the weeks following pre-emergent application.

POST-EMERGENTS:

- Used as a spot treatment.
- Effective on young and growing crabgrass and broadleaf weeds.

Although chemical treatments are very helpful, the biggest enemy to crabgrass is healthy turfgrass. **Crabgrass will not persist if your turf is rich and thick to begin with.** Mowing high, routine watering, and scheduled fertilization maximizes the health of your grass and minimizes crabgrasses' areas for opportunity.



Growing Grass in the Dark?

The number one question every spring is, "Why does the grass under my trees thin out every year?" The reasons are many (four), and the solutions are few (one).



Tom R. Grunkemeyer
President, Buckeye EcoCare



REASON #1

Turfgrass is a sun-loving plant that requires four to six hours of direct sunlight every day in order to compete and grow. This rarely happens to grass growing under mature trees.

REASON #2

Tree roots sharing the same space as grass roots are more numerous and therefore steal valuable nutrients and water from the turf.

REASON #3

Cultural practices such as mowing and trimming may be harmful to tender plants growing in the shade. A weed whacker is also a grass hacker.

REASON #4

Trees are more important to the environment than turf. It is estimated that Ohio will lose two to three million ash trees within the next five years due to the invasion of the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB). Plant a tree, plant a tree, plant a tree.



As your young trees grow and mature, maintain them properly. Limb up the lower branches every spring, thin out and deadwood any limbs that are not productive so you can get some filtered sunlight to the plants below.

The best solution is to plant shade-loving ground covers under your trees while they are young. This will minimize the maintenance required around your trees, provide a sustainable ground cover, and add color and texture to your landscape. Some clients (like me) prefer one plant for simplicity and color while others choose four to six different species for a more natural effect.

Please review the photos shown here and feel free to consult with your route manager or contact one of the local landscape designers in your area. Trees are an important part of the landscape, but turfgrass and trees do not make good bed partners.

Client Testimonial:

"So far your service has been the best I've had. Tim Garrett is a great person. It's rare in this day and age to have someone who cares about the job that they do. He does his job extremely well."

~ Customer #527395



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Find the Balance with Integrated Pest Management

Doing away with harmful and invasive insects is a major goal when it comes to lawn care. In recent years, it has become obvious that simply carpet bombing your lawn with pesticide is a short-sighted, and potentially harmful method of pest control. Integrated Pest Management (IPM) is a method which employs preventative measures, effective diagnosis, and healthy cultural practices in addition to measured and selective pesticide treatments.



FOLLOWING THESE STEPS WILL LEAD TO A WELL-BALANCED ATTACK ON PESTS:

Prevention: Selecting plants that normally do well in the area gives them a big advantage in naturally resisting pest invasions and damage.

Inspection: Scheduled visits to check for brown patches, wilted plants, other signs of damage and actual pest presence.

Identification: Once a pest or its damage is found, it's important to determine what kind it is. There are thousands of insect varieties, and many are beneficial. Care should be taken to target only the bad ones.

Treatment: Sometimes watering, good mowing habits and aeration (which opens the soil and thatch layer) are enough to combat the problem. If a large and damaging population of insects is present, focused pesticide treatments will also be recommended.

