



**BUCKEYE
ECOCARE®**

Family Owned Since 1984



Knowing one's opponent is helpful in any sort of competition, whether it's sports or lawn care. The information age has allowed baseball teams to dissect opponents' strengths, weaknesses and tendencies. Pitchers these days know exactly what and what not to throw to specific hitters. They use information to their advantage whenever possible.

Information such as soil testing can give seasoned professionals like Buckeye EcoCare a distinct advantage over their competition. Since 1984, we have sampled over 700 lawns in the Miami Valley area. These tests allow us to feed your turf and trees with the right fertilizer at the right time.

Lawn care professionals utilize the knowledge they've gathered over the years in order to best fight enemies who seek to destroy your lawn. Pests, disease and weeds conspire to prevent the rich, uniform lawn that you seek to establish. Knowing what makes certain weeds "tick" is key to learning how to best address them. In this issue, we take a look at a few types of different weeds and what it takes to stop them.

GETTING A READ ON DIFFERENT WEEDS

Homeowners who care about their turf seek a lawn that is plush, green and uniform. While this is a worthy goal to shoot for, it's a major challenge to realize. Even as the turfgrass that you've planted thrives, invasive weeds are always trying to make inroads. Weeds compete for the same resources (sunlight, water and nutrients) that your turf needs. A successful invasion can lead to these weeds eventually taking over large areas of turf. Not all weeds are the same, but they can be put into two major categories: grassy and broadleaf.

INVADERS IN DISGUISE

Grassy weeds are (you guessed it) very similar in shape and appearance to your established turfgrass.

Creeping bent grass, goosegrass and crabgrass are types of grassy weeds that try their best to blend in with your turf. These grassy weeds can quickly take up residence and they can be extremely hard to get rid of once they begin to spread. Since these invasive weeds are very similar to turf, weed removal must be very selective to avoid harming the lawn itself. The best treatment for these types of weeds is a selective pre-emergent that stops weed seeds from germinating into viable plants. This stops the germination process while leaving established turf unharmed. The best time to apply these treatments is in the spring, when warm temperatures are setting the growth process in motion. Since these applications stop seed germination, it's important to avoid pre-emergent treatments on newly seeded turf areas.



BROADLEAF BLUES

Broadleaf weeds are the second category of weeds that your lawn will likely encounter. These weeds are leafy, not blade-like. While they vary greatly, broadleaf weeds such as dandelions, ground ivy and clover stick out like a sore thumb. The good thing about broadleaf weeds' distinctive features is that they're easy to locate and spot-treat after they've emerged. Some broadleaf weeds are annuals that come back year after year, while some are perennials and more difficult to control. The best treatment for broadleaf weeds is a post-emergent spray that allows us to actively attack growing weeds when they're most susceptible.

Weeds come in all shapes and sizes. Knowing what you're dealing with and acting accordingly can set your lawn up for a long, healthy season free of weedy interlopers.

LANDSCAPING: NATURE'S AIR CONDITIONER

In addition to providing decorative beauty, living landscape such as trees and shrubs can also be an environmental asset. One of the practical benefits of living landscape is its ability to cool the areas around it.

First of all, trees and shrubs provide shade. The ancient Romans planted rows of tall, column-like cypress trees primarily for the cool shadows that they cast. To this day, walls and canopies of dense greenery still provide comforting shade to the properties where they reside. This is especially beneficial in urban areas full of concrete, which holds onto heat that it gathers in the form of sunlight.



A more complex way that landscaping reduces temperature is through the natural process of transpiration. In transpiration, moisture is transferred from the tree's roots all the way up through the plant structure to the leaves. Tiny droplets of water are released through tiny pores in the leaves, where they evaporate and become water vapor. The heat that is needed to convert the water to vapor is removed from the surrounding atmosphere, cooling the air around the tree.

By providing shade and removing ambient heat via transpiration, trees and shrubs create refreshing comfort that allows you to enjoy your outdoor spaces all summer long.

FIGHTING WEEDS WITH HEALTHY TURF



In the quest to rid your lawn of weeds, it's important to remember that the best way to fight invasive vegetation is to prevent it from taking hold. A thin, unhealthy lawn is an inviting setting for weeds to thrive. Exposed soil coupled with weak or compromised turf is an open door to a variety of annual and perennial weeds. A healthy and robust lawn, on the other hand, makes it difficult for weeds to make inroads.

The combination of proper mowing and thorough fertilization and watering practices fosters a vital and weed-resistant lawn. Regular watering throughout the summer gives turf the upper hand when vying for territory against weeds that thrive in hot, dry conditions. A comprehensive fertilization schedule provides the nutrients that

your lawn needs to expand and fortify itself year-round. With a steady supply of food and water, weeds will have limited opportunities to make their presence known.

Mowing your lawn may not seem related to weed prevention, but the right mowing habits can be very beneficial. Weeds need sunlight to germinate. Lawns that are mowed too short lack the top growth that shields the soil from the sun. Increased soil exposure raises the lawn's temperature, which impedes turf growth while facilitating weed development. A best practice is to set your mower blades to only remove one-third of the blade height with each mowing.

While herbicides are an important part of lawn care, fostering vital, healthy turf is the best defense against invasive weeds.

EMBRACING TECHNOLOGY

Embracing technology takes time, patience and a little understanding from our clients. This newsletter is only available via e-mail, on our website or simply by clicking on this link: www.buckeyeecocare.com/newsletters/. We have three other new and exciting electronic tools available that will make our services more efficient and effective.

- 1) We have a new payment portal on our website that allows you to make credit card payments without calling our offices with your card information. It's a much more secure and productive way to process payments.
- 2) A satellite routing and tracking system has been installed in each truck in order to make our drivers more efficient with their vehicles. In the past, we might have had two service personnel in the same neighborhood on the same day.
- 3) Tablets are now being used by all of our route managers. These tablets allow for customers' texts and e-mail messages to be delivered directly to their respective service technicians. The tablets also allow our drivers to access client account information instantly, providing better customer service.

I'm not sure how many trees we're saving by not producing thousands of paper newsletters, buying updated maps annually or printing three-part invoices for each customer with every service visit, but every tree saved is more CO₂ for us.

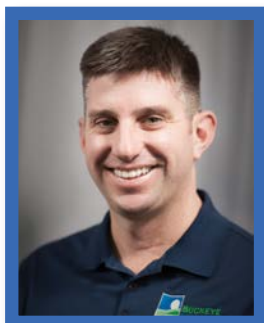
While we realize that all new technology is imperfect, we also know that we're moving in the right direction and there will be some bumps in the road.

As always, if you have questions about any of our fine services, you can still pick up the old phone, call our offices and talk with a live, local person during our normal office hours. New technology is great, but sometimes the old technology still works best.

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A recent note from a satisfied customer...

"You guys did a great job on my lawn last year. That means a lot coming from me, an industry horticulturist all my life. Thanks."

- Brad L.

