

Gardeners Voice

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Naturescape, LLC

Editor in Chief: Jeffrey T. Miner
Contributing writer: Marcie Miner

Website: NaturescapeCt.com

Call us at:
860-742-0326 or email at:
Naturescape1@comcast.net

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An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

That statement is so true in many areas particularly when it comes to weeds. One of the biggest jobs we have of the season is to set up your lawn to insure weeds don't drive us all crazy. Without going through all the types of weeds and how they are varied ways in controlling them, we focus our spring-time efforts on preventing them from showing their heads in the first place. While many weeds generally are not terrible and can be tolerated to some level, crabgrass can be pretty destructive. One plant can produce 150,000 seeds in one year making it pretty prolific. It crowds out grass and renders the soil bare in the fall and early spring. So we apply a pre-emergent weed control to prevent it as well as the other annual weeds from forming.

Unfortunately, there is still that cost barrier we have to overcome in using organic compounds vs inorganics but we are making headway.

Crabgrass wasn't always a hated weed. Years ago it was a valuable crop. "Stone Age dwellers in Switzerland cultivated crabgrass and it was an important food crop in China by 2700 B.C. It's a traditional food in India and Africa. It was first introduced into the U.S. in 1849 by the United States Patent Office as forage for cattle, sheep, hogs and horses. Then the Department of Agriculture was formed and it took over making crabgrass as a main agricultural crop. Immigrants from eastern Europe relied on the grain calling it kasha/kasza and spread it around.

Growers soon learned that corn and wheat could be grown just as easily and was worth more money

than crabgrass. The beginning of crabgrass' transition from valued food to hated weed was born." Courtesy of: <http://www.eattheweeds.com/crabgrass-digitaria-sanguinalis-2/>

Not all weeds are destructive and some are actually good for lawns. Clover is a legume and produces nitrogen. It also is nature's pollinator for bees. We like to encourage our customers to not let weeds ruin your day. As your lawn care provider we are doing everything we can within the program you have chosen to reduce weeds that ruin lawns. Does that mean in the Worry Free Program you will not see a single weed? No. Does that mean at the end of the year you will have to seed your lawn to fill in bare spots made by weeds? No. Does



that mean one weed left today will multiply and become overwhelming. No. Be assured that we are dancing that delicate balance between using the least amount of pesticides and keeping weeds at bay so you will have a beautiful lawn you can enjoy.

I have started to become fascinated with edibles we find in our gardens. We throw away weeds by the bushel and I've often wondered if we could feed the hungry with these cast offs. Heck, if you look closely you might find me snacking on your pine tree. haha

Improving Drainage

Springtime rain is a welcome drink for your lawn and garden, but it is possible to have too much of a good thing. Lawns that do not drain properly run the risk of collecting water – water that can be damaging on several fronts. Pooling water in your lawn itself turns a carpet of grass into a muddy mess. In plant beds, too much water can flood root systems, causing disease that can be

harmful to valuable landscaping. Standing water is also a breeding ground for mosquitoes and other pests.

There are a few ways to improve your lawn's drainage, and the right solution depends on the severity of the problem. Removing large amounts of standing water will most often require an installed drainage system of some sort. The most common of these include buried pipe or a gravel-filled ditch that carry water downhill off your property. This can alleviate a lot of water problems although it does involve some excavation.

Just for fun. Answers from this winters newsletter:

Otapi was Patio
rrwoy wasWorry free lawns
nnrageigd (ha ha I forgot!)

**Some new ones: hint
(muscles)**

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Yea! It's Spring!!

You could avoid the involved process of digging up and rebuilding your yard by embracing your damp area and making it a featured part of your landscape. Plants such as Blueberry, Kalmia, Clethra, Joe Pye weed and some varieties of irises thrive in wet areas. If a turf area has chronic drainage problems, it is possible to replace the turf with a 'water garden' full of thirsty plants, rocks and gravel. This attractive feature adds beauty while addressing drainage issues.

Core aeration can also help counter drainage issues. Properly aerated lawns tend to handle water better than those with compacted soil.

Regardless of the size of your lawn or the scope of the issue, several solutions exist that will prevent your lawn from sinking down the drain.

We have many years of experience in dealing with drainage issues as well as aeration. We are ready to provide drainage solutions when problems arise. If you are having problems with standing water, please give us a call. There is a good chance that the cost will not be as significant as you might think.

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