



CRABGRASS AND OTHER WEEDS GOT A GRIP ON YOUR LAWN?

Why is Blanket Crabgrass and other grasses a problem in my St. Augustine lawn?

There are currently NO PRODUCTS that can effectively remove crabgrass or other grasses without also killing St Augustine.

Asulox is illegal.

Until 1997 landscape and lawn care companies routinely scheduled treatments that selectively removed blanket and India crabgrass from lawns using a product called Asulox. In 1997 the manufacture of Asulox agreed to cancel all lawn uses of Asulox to avoid the cost of conducting research to determine that the product could be without risk to applicators using handheld equipment. Use of Asulox is illegal.

Cinnamon and Baking Soda doesn't work.

About two years ago a Tampa man began marketing a powdery combination of Cinnamon and Baking soda combined with some food coloring that when dusted on wet crabgrass caused the leaves to turn black and die while leaving St Augustine leave green. The product did not require an EPA approval because it contained only food grade ingredients. The product was sold in Home Depot type stores and may even still be available. What many professionals found was that although this was a neat visual trick, the crabgrass quickly recovered. The product just offered no long-term control.

What about using Pre-emergence Products that control crabgrass as golf courses do?

Blanket crabgrass is a perennial plant in all of Florida and South Georgia. Pre-emergence weed control product only controls weeds as they sprout from seed. Crabgrass control in golf turf indeed uses pre-emergence weed control but also uses post-emergence crabgrass control products such as MSMA that would kill St Augustine turf along with the crabgrass. Additionally pre-emergence control products are potentially more damaging to St Augustine than they are to Bermuda grass. With enough application we might keep blanket crabgrass seedling from sprouting but we would likely create rooting problems for St Augustine at the same time. These applications would do little or nothing to prevent the spread of existing patches of crabgrass.

How do I get blanket crabgrass and other grasses out of my lawn?

Step 1: Unfortunately the only reliable procedure is to spray out patches of crabgrass and other grasses with a non-selective product such as Roundup and then replant the resulting dead area with new sod. Plugging these areas are normally not an option because plugged areas are highly prone to bug infestation and re-infestation of crabgrass and other grasses.

Step 2: Be sure you are not routinely over-watering you lawn. Heavy infrequent application is the best way to schedule irrigation. This allows time for the soil surface to dry between applications. This soil drying will kill many seedling weeds before they can become established in your lawn.

Step 3: Be on the lookout for young crabgrass and other grass plants and pull them out by hand.

Will this situation change?

The landscape industry is constantly looking for new innovations that will solve this problem, but right now professionals don't see much hope for a new control product even though 80% of Florida landscapes are planted with St Augustine. The market for crabgrass and foreign grass control products is very small compared to the cost of development and registration.

Some resources.....

A great resource for lawn information is the website GardenRebel.com and also Orange County's website Ocextension.ifas.ufl.edu.