

Lawn Care

ST. LOUIS WEED CONTROL

Free E-Book

Classifying Weeds

Why weeds exist and their
lifecycle stages
Chapter One

Control Methods

Suggested products and
when to apply them
Chapter Two

Identification

Photos of common weeds
and when they germinate
Chapter Three

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YOUR GUIDE TO LAWN CARE

part 1

Classifying Weeds

Categorizing weeds into three botanic groups to design best practices to defeat them.

part 2

Control Methods

Pre-emergents, post-emergents, herbicides... find out what all this means and when to apply products.

part 3

Identification

Put your knowledge to the test with photos of common weeds, their classification and season of bloom.





THE AMERICAN DREAM

Imagine your kids playing catch, hanging out in the backyard for BBQ's and enjoying the company of your friends and family with a weed-free turf.

Lawns create a relaxing space full of natural beauty that quickly affects your mood the longer you hang out in it. Feelings of tranquility and happiness are not uncommon when lounging on a green, lush lawn.

A thick, green lawn will attract bare feet and beautify the world you live in.

Besides the aesthetic values, well-maintained lawns also benefit our environment.

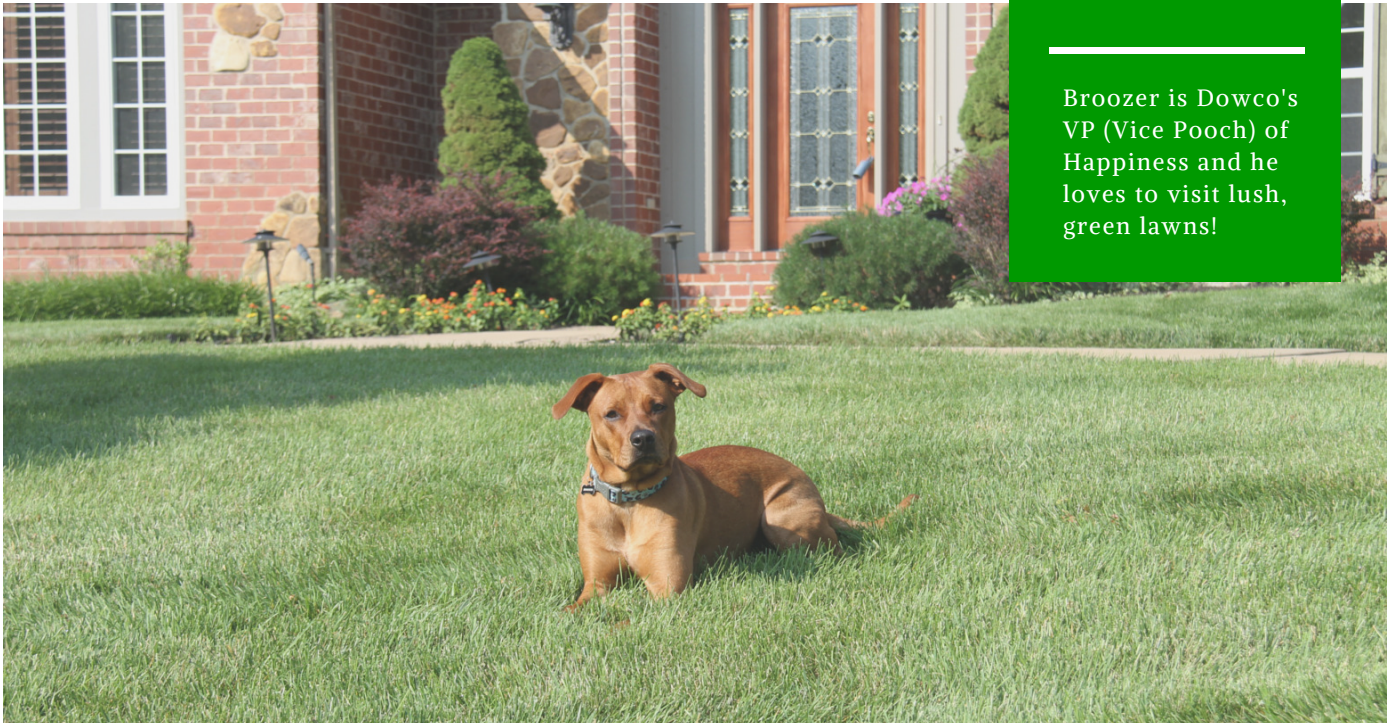
- Lawns absorb the sun's heat, making you feel cooler in the summer time.
- Got allergies? A healthy lawn reduces the weed pollen in the air, absorbs pollutants and returns pure oxygen.
- Soft landscapes like grass will absorb sound instead of reflecting it, creating a quieter outdoor living space.

The American dream of a weed-free lawn can be yours with just a bit of knowledge.

THE PROBLEM WITH ST. LOUIS GRASSES

Get to know the grass choices we have in available in the Midwest region.

by Dowco Enterprises Inc.



Broozer is Dowco's VP (Vice Pooch) of Happiness and he loves to visit lush, green lawns!

Weeds are defined as any undesirable plant.

When a weed enters your turf, it's not only undesirable but also unsightly and causes a disturbance to the overall value of your landscape. Well maintained lawns in St. Louis are not only appealing, but have become virtually expected.

The problem with the lawns available in St. Louis is that there isn't a turf grass that works perfectly. Our zone 5-6 environment isn't favorable to either warm or cool season grasses, which means we're working with less than perfect conditions to begin with.

If you're new to the area it may be unfamiliar to you that St. Louis lawn weed control service providers use such a robust fertilization and weed control program. If our grasses were well reformed, we would be less prone to weed invasions because the turf would be more likely to thrive and block out the weeds.

Our Options

In St. Louis we typically work with marginally adapted Fescue, Zoysia or Bluegrass turf which means that a weed-free lawn is going to require careful programming of fertilization, pesticide applications and other best practices.

Some of these common best practices for turf include aerating the lawn in the fall, mowing at the appropriate height for the season, proper watering, and timely over-seeding.

Understanding the specific weed problem you have can uncover indicators of unfavorable conditions.

For example, Knotweed frequently occurs in areas of severe soil compaction, Ground Ivy thrives under trees where there is insufficient sunlight and Red Sorrel is usually indicative of overly acidic soil.

“In St. Louis we can grow any grass; we just can't grow any grass really well.”

It's important to identify the problem that your turf has in order to properly assess what can and should be done to remedy your lawn. But first, let's get a grasp for when St. Louis lawn weeds will be prevalent.

CLASSIFYING ST. LOUIS LAWN WEEDS

It's beneficial to have a basic understanding of a weed's life cycle, growth and reproduction strategy in order to design best practices for defeating them.

Weeds can be categorized into 3 different botanical groups of annuals, biennials and perennials.

ANNUAL WEEDS

Annual weeds complete their life cycle within 1 year and will die off on their own if left untreated.

Winter annual weeds, such as Chickweed & Henbit, germinate in late summer and die the following summer with the heat.

Summer annual weeds germinate in spring and die off with the first hard frost in the fall and include Spurge and Crabgrass.

BIENNIAL WEEDS

Biennial weeds will live longer than the annual weeds, but not longer than 2 years.

The first year, seeds will germinate and grow and in the second year they will flower. After flowering and seed production they will die off.

Common examples in our area include Bull Thistle, Wild Carrot and Evening Primrose.

PERENNIAL WEEDS

Perennial weeds will live for more than 2 years and sometimes indefinitely.

Weeds like Quackgrass & Nutsedge can reproduce using stolons, rhizomes, and nutlets. These forms of reproduction all take place underground making them tougher to eliminate. Wild onions and Garlic grow from a bulb, just like the store bought kind.

Other perennial weeds like Dandelions and Plantains are designed to spread mostly by seed above ground.

Dandelions will come back year after year if their long taproot is not removed or properly treated.



WEED IDENTIFICATION GUIDE

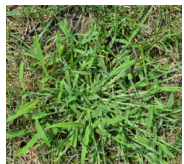
➔ Poa Annua



Classification: winter annual or perennial weed
Thrives in: moist, shaded conditions. Compact soils.
Season: spring, dies off when it gets too hot

Looks like it could be Kentucky bluegrass but lighter in color and develops unsightly seed heads earlier in the spring. Use a late summer pre-emergent to prevent seeds from sprouting, or wait until hotter temps.

➔ Smooth & Hairy Crabgrass



Classification: summer annual grasses
Thrives in: virtually anywhere.
Season: late spring, summer, fall, dies off with first hard frost.

Easily identified by it's crab-like shape stemming from one central root low to the ground. Apply a pre-emergent early spring to stop the weed seeds before they germinate, mow at proper height, and deeply water your lawn.

➔ Goosegrass



Classification: summer annual grass
Thrives in: compact, poorly drained soil with warmer temperatures
Season: summer & fall.

Goosegrass looks like a grungy, matted lump of flattened stems. It grows low to the ground and has silver or whitish stems at the base. Germinates a few weeks after crabgrass and predominately in heavily trafficked areas or places where mowing or trimming is low.

Continue reading on next page >



WEED CONTROL METHODS

Selective herbicides, commonly known as weed killers, are products designed to be toxic to weeds and disrupt their life cycle stage while leaving the desired turf grass unharmed.

Many St. Louis weeds are treated using pre-emergence and/or post-emergence selective herbicides. St. Louis lawn care companies and weed control service providers can oftentimes acquire products that are not available at local home improvement stores and are more potent.

There are two types of selective herbicides that are commonly used.

1

Pre-Emergent

2

Post-Emergent

WEED IDENTIFICATION GUIDE

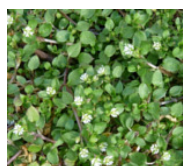
➞ Plantain



Classification: perennial broadleaf
Thrives in: soil with inadequate turf grass growth, wet or soggy
Season: late spring, summer, fall.

Easy to spot, the Plantain has smooth and wide leaves. Leafless flower stalks will form in the center if left untreated. Hand pulling is only effective short term due to seeds spreading during disruption. Control with systemic weed control.

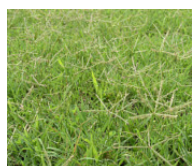
➞ Chickweed or Starwort



Classification: creeping winter annual
Thrives in: moist, compacted soils, thin turf
Season: late spring, summer, fall.

This annual weed grows from seed and sprouts in fall. In cool seasons, it forms a dense mat with white, star like flowers. Best controlled in the spring or fall with a post-emergent.

➞ Bermudagrass



Classification: warm season perennial grass
Thrives in: warm, temperate climates, drought tolerant
Season: spring to fall

This grass is commonly used as a lawn in southern states. In St. Louis it becomes a nuisance weed to control in turf and beds. It is most noticed in summer when lawns are stressed and identified by hair on stems. Cultural practices like overseeding are best for control.

Pre-Emergent herbicides are applied before the weeds begin to germinate. The date when a pre-emergent weed killer should be applied is dependent upon when the germination takes place during the season. Several annual broadleaf weeds can be controlled using a pre-emergent herbicide.

The most commonly treated weed in St. Louis using a pre-emergent is Crabgrass. Crabgrass pre-emergents should be applied several weeks before the anticipated germination to ensure control.

Pre-emergents work when they are applied to soil to create a thin barrier blocking the seed from germination. Some factors such as rainfall or watering and wear and tear may break the barrier down faster than anticipated.

When a weed has already germinated in your lawn, it needs to be treated with a post-emergent herbicide which is designed to be applied after the weed has become visible. Broadleaf weeds and Sedges are mostly treated this way.

There are two types of control that post-emergent herbicides may contain so it is important to read the label and understand the weed you are working with. Tough to control weeds such as Nutsedge will often require two types of post-emergent control.

1. Contact Control – Herbicides that work on contact will destroy the portions of the weed that they touch. Contact herbicides work exceptionally well for annual weeds.

2. Systemic Control – These herbicides will spread within the weed as it is absorbed, making this type of control very effective for perennial weeds.

➞ White Clover



Classification: creeping perennial
Thrives in: moist conditions with low soil fertility
Season: spring, summer, fall.

Clovers don't usually bring good luck, mostly they bring bees. Treat clover with a post-emergent that won't harm your lawn. Also provide additional nitrogen to your soil through fertilization to keep clover away.

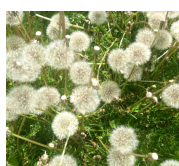
➞ Yellow Nutsedge



Classification: perennial sedge
Thrives in: low spots, high moisture areas, warm temperatures
Season: late spring and summer, disappears in cool fall weather

Commonly called nut grass, this weed is Kelly green in color and grows extremely fast. A well seeded lawn is able to fight nutsedge so overseed every year. There is no pre-emergent control.

➞ Dandelion



Classification: perennial broadleaf
Thrives in: Moist sites with full sunlight
Season: spring, summer, fall.

Yellow flowers mature and turn into white fluff balls which are seeds spread by the wind. When treating dandelions it's important to kill the entire plant and the taproot to prevent spreading which is why hand pulling is not effective.



WE LOVE LAWNS

Your green lawn is a valuable part of your landscaping because it provides an area for outdoor play and entertainment for you and your family to enjoy.

Could you imagine playing in a backyard that has knee-high grass filled with bugs and weeds? Yuck!

Did you know that with a well-designed and properly maintained landscape you can increase the property value of your home by 15% to 20%? For those who aren't good at math, that turns a \$500,000 home into a \$575,000 home!

You realize that your lawn is an important investment or you wouldn't have downloaded this free e-book.

So you're definitely going to hire a professional lawn care company to handle it for you. Dowco is the best lawn care company to care for and protect your American dream! We're ready to serve you today.

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