

UNL Extension: Acreage Insights

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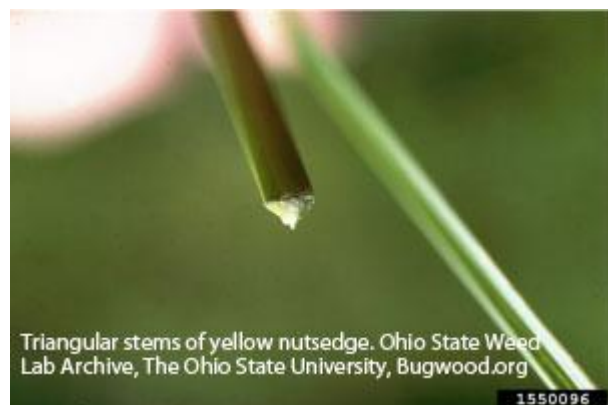
Common Weeds in the Home Lawn

By [Nicole Stoner](#), UNL Extension Horticulture Educator

There are many different types of weeds that seem to infest our lawns each spring and summer. Some of these can be a real nuisance to get rid of. No matter how difficult a weed is to get rid of, or how easy, they are still something that we all desperately work all spring and summer to control, sometimes with minimal success.

Nutsedge is a horrible weed in some lawns. It is a sedge, which is similar to a grass but it has triangular shaped stems. Nutsedge is typically found in areas of the lawn that are poorly drained and it tends to spread from that original location. Nutsedge is easy to find in lawns because it grows faster than the turf, so it will stand taller than the grass a few days after mowing, and it is a lighter green color than traditional grasses.

Usually nutsedge becomes a problem in lawns in the summer, usually in May and June but it is early this year. Control for nutsedge can be done with a product called Sedgehammer. Typically this is recommended for use in June prior to the summer solstice, June 21st, to reduce the amount of tubers that are formed. However, this year, since it germinated so soon, we are recommending that it should be applied anytime now and then again in June just prior to the summer solstice.



Dandelions are another pesky weed that most people are familiar with. This is the broadleaved plant that blooms yellow in the early spring and turns to white seedheads later in the spring. Best control will be achieved if you spray broadleaf weeds in the fall with two to three applications during the September and October time frame. Control can also be done during the spring of the year, but the herbicides do not move as well throughout the plant and therefore don't lead to as good of control. Either time of the year when you treat for dandelions, you can use general broadleaf controls such as 2,4-D, MCPP, and Dicamba. Combination products give better control than a single chemical alone.



Creeping Charlie or Ground Ivy is a very horrible weed. It is very hard to control. Creeping Charlie is a perennial broadleaf weed, meaning that it comes back every year. This plant is the one that has scalloped leaves, like a seashell, and has a small purple flower. It also has square stems and smells like mint when you mow over it because it is a member of the mint family. This weed is also best controlled in the fall with 2 or 3 applications in September and October. For a homeowner, broadleaf herbicides containing Triclopyr as the active ingredient will have the best control on this weed. One application will not kill the weed. This is also a weed that takes several years to fully control.



Crabgrass is a troublesome weed that is found in almost all yards every year. Most people control crabgrass with a preemergent herbicide in combination with their first fertilizer treatment of the spring. A crabgrass preemergent application will also control many other grassy weeds, including annual bluegrass, foxtail, goosegrass, and others. Crabgrass preemergent herbicides need to be applied before the crabgrass germinates in the spring, which is when the soil temperatures have reached 55-60 degrees Fahrenheit for three or more days. This year crabgrass germinated quite early. Preemergent controls were needed in mid-March for good control. At

this point you can use herbicides containing Dithiopyr for some post and some preemergent control for crabgrass if you haven't applied anything this year.