



## Featured Article

### WEEDS – THE GIFT THAT KEEPS ON GIVING

When most of us moved into the area, we had front yards of freshly laid sod. But as the seasons passed, we began to see weeds cropping up. Although we live in a relatively controlled environment, it is impossible to prevent weed intrusion.

The term weed is somewhat subjective. Weeds, by definition, are “plants out of place.” For lawns, there are two basic types of weeds; grass-like and broadleaf. The most common grass-like weeds in our area are warm season grasses such as Bermuda, crabgrass, and *Poa annua*. These are the grasses that are pallid green and turn yellow in the fall.

Weeds can invade your lawn and rob it of much-needed moisture and nutrients. They are carried by the wind and birds, or transferred from a lawnmower by not cleaning the mower after each use – a common problem with neighborhood gardeners.

There are several methods for controlling weeds. Each type of weed however, requires a different approach. Some commercial fertilizers contain a weed-killing additive, which helps to control broadleaf weeds. Selective pre-emergent and post-emergent herbicides may also be used, but only with special care and by assiduously following the manufacturer’s instructions.

Some prefer the old-fashioned way – pulling weeds by hand. However, your best defense against weeds may be a dense and vigorous lawn, which can be accomplished by aerifying, fertilizing, and irrigating properly.

Once a lawn has become overrun by weeds, it might be necessary to remove the turf completely and start over. Take the time to pre-treat the area to rid it of any lingering or unwanted weeds before re-sodding. This may also be the perfect opportunity to think about a water efficient landscape design for the yard.