

Control Field Bindweed (*Convolvulus arvensis*) with Other Broadleaf Weeds this Fall August 18, 2016

Field bindweed (also known as Creeping Jenny) is a perennial, broadleaf weed that is difficult to control. Bindweed tolerates drought, and may heavily infest thin turf stands during summer. It has a prostrate growth habit with spade- or arrowhead-shaped leaves (Figures 1 and 2). White or pink flowers are visible during summer, though they are likely not currently visible. Bindweed is propagated vegetatively from buds on roots and as seed – both are important. By most accounts, roots may extend more than 20 feet into soil under good growing conditions, and seed may remain viable even more than 20 years after dispersal. Because of vegetative propagation from extensive root systems, some sources indicate that preemergence herbicides have no utility for control. I agree that preemergence herbicides, alone, are inadequate for control, but they do have a place in an integrated control program where field bindweed is well established. Preemergence herbicides will prevent new seedling establishment, whereas hand-pulling or treating immature plants with postemergence herbicides in spring will reduce new seed production, and fall-applied postemergence herbicides may make the translocation of herbicide to roots more likely for more complete control.



Figure 1. Field bindweed growing in a tall fescue lawn.



Figure 2. A senescing flower on an established field bindweed stem.

Postemergence herbicides such as 2,4-D, dicamba, or quinclorac (alone or in combination) may selectively remove bindweed without damaging turf. The nonselective herbicide glyphosate is also effective. For heavy infestations, multiple applications each year over multiple years will be necessary to achieve adequate control. Treating bindweed in midsummer or when stressed will reduce efficacy. For best results, treat bindweed with 2,4-D and/or glyphosate in spring, or with dicamba and/or quinclorac before the first frost in fall. Many products contain various mixtures of the aforementioned (and other) herbicides, and may be efficacious in spring or fall. Additionally, combination products often control a wider array of weeds compared to those that contain a single active ingredient, which makes for an efficient application.

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