

## Tips to control troublesome lawn weeds this fall

Fall is the best time to control many troublesome perennial broadleaf weeds. Dandelions, wild violet, ground ivy (creeping Charlie) and white clover are excellent examples of weeds we'd like to control in the fall. First, understand why the weed is prospering. Most weeds tolerate environment stress like shade, soil compaction and low soil fertility better than turfgrasses. This gives them the competitive advantage and leads to widespread infestation. Herbicide control without fixing the deficient growing conditions will only be a temporary fix and not a long-term solution. Still, many of these weeds can persist even under ideal conditions. When populations are low, mechanical control can sometimes be an option. More typically herbicides are required to control these pesky perennial weeds. Here are few tips to help improve control this fall:

**Clover:** White clover is a tough perennial weed. It is a legume that is more frequently found in areas with that are sparse and under fertilized. Nitrogen fertilization can help prevent white clover from encroachment. It is also more shade tolerant than most turf species and can be more of a problem in shade. The active ingredient 2,4-D alone will not control clover. Use a herbicide that contains quinclorac or dicamba to maximize control. With white clover and weeds below, the ideal time to use a herbicide is from mid-September until mid-October.

**Dandelion:** While dandelion is fairly easy to control in the fall, it can be difficult to control and highly obvious when blooming in spring. Herbicides containing 2,4-D applied in fall generally provide excellent control of dandelion. Maintain adequate turf density through proper fall fertilization to help prevent future infestations.

**Ground ivy:** This perennial weed is commonly found in sites under shade stress. Use of triclopyr or fluroxypyr alone or in combination with a traditional 3-way herbicide will provide the best control of ground ivy. Multiple applications may be needed for complete control as this weed is quite persistent. Quinclorac (Drive) can also provide control of ground ivy.

**Wild violets:** This tough to control perennial is also commonly found in shady locations. Widespread violets are an indication that turf may not be well-suited to that particular environment. Strive to promote healthy growing conditions with adequate sun and drainage. Herbicide mixtures with triclopyr as an ingredient will be most effective. Multiple apps may be required.

Dr. Aaron Patton from Purdue University publishes a great weed control reference book annually called *Turfgrass Weed Control for Professionals*. I highly encourage all turfgrass managers to purchase a copy when battling weeds in their turf. [Order a copy here.](#)

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