

The Least Wanted List

THESE BAD ACTORS INVADE LAWNS ACROSS THE UNITED STATES EVERY YEAR.
ARM YOURSELF TO STOP THEM NOW AND DETER THEM IN THE FUTURE.



DANDELION

Alias: *Taraxacum officinale*

Last seen: In sunny, open spots in spring

Know: To minimize future invasions, get rid of dandelions before the puffy white tops show up. Enjoy the first small leaves in a spring salad—if you haven't treated your lawn with toxic chemicals.

Treat: Dig out the whole taproot with a small trowel. Douse small clusters with a nontoxic fatty acid (soap) spray, like Safer Brand Fast-Acting Weed and Grass Killer.

Prevent: Spread corn gluten meal, a natural herbicide available as Concern Weed Prevention Plus, in spring and again in fall to stop the seeds from germinating.



MOSS

Alias: The moss found in most lawns are bryophytes.

Last seen: Looking green in the shadiest areas of lawns

Know: Moss can be a soft and lush alternative to grass in areas that get no sunlight. It takes root in soil that has a low (acidic) pH and poor fertility.

Treat: Moss is easy to rake out or to kill with soap sprays, but unless the conditions change, it will come back.

Prevent: Plant another type of ground cover that grows in shade, such as pachysandra or myrtle.



WILD ONION & GARLIC

Alias: *Allium ascalonicum* L. & *Allium vineale* L.

Last seen: Growing taller than grass in spring and returning as the days get shorter in autumn

Know: Wild onions and garlic look very similar, but the onion's leaves are flat and solid, while garlic's are rounder and hollow. Both are closely related to the onions and garlic grown in gardens, but with much smaller and more pungent-tasting bulbs.

Treat: Dig up small clusters, taking care to get the whole bulb and its little roots. As the weather heats up, they naturally die off.

Prevent: Overseed sparse areas and patch bare spots of the lawn in fall with a seed-and-feed kit such as Safer Brand Magic Start Grass Patch. Check your soil's pH to be sure it is 6.0 to 6.5.



CRABGRASS

Alias: *Digitaria* spp.

Last seen: In clay soil during the heat of summer

Know: An aggressive spreader, crabgrass outcompetes cool-season grasses when temperatures peak.

Treat: Spray small clusters with Safer Brand Fast-Acting Weed and Grass Killer. Rake out the shallow-rooted weed and patch bare spots as soon as possible.

Prevent: Cut your grass at the mower's highest setting to allow the lawn to grow taller and shade out the weed. Limit watering in summer, when crabgrass is most active. Spread Concern Weed Prevention Plus (corn gluten meal) in spring and fall.



BROADLEAF PLANTAIN

Alias: *Plantago major*

Last seen: In compacted soil from late spring through fall

Know: Though it shares its common name with a tropical (banana-like) fruit, they have nothing else in common.

Treat: Dig up the shallow-rooted weed before the thin stems emerge and form seeds for the next crop.

Prevent: Aerate soil and add organic matter to reduce compaction—the most favorable conditions for this weed.



NUTSEDGE

Alias: *Cyperus esculentus* L., nutgrass

Last seen: Colonizing sunny but wet areas in summer

Know: Nutsedge produces little tubers (the so-called "nuts") as deep as 14 inches below the soil surface.

Treat: Repeatedly pulling off the top leaves or dousing it with Fast-Acting Weed and Grass Killer can reduce the plant's energy to regrow, but digging up the whole plant is the only surefire way to eliminate it.

Prevent: Improve the soil's drainage by adding organic matter. Allow the soil to dry out thoroughly between waterings.



GROUND IVY

Alias: *Glechoma hederacea* L., Creeping Charlie

Last seen: From spring to fall, spreading where grass is cut short

Know: Ground ivy is better adapted to areas with low fertility than lawn grass is.

Treat: A spray made with 10 ounces of laundry borax dissolved in 4 ounces of warm water and diluted in 2.5 gallons of room temperature water will eradicate 1,000 square feet of ground ivy. Overseed sparse areas of the lawn and patch bare spots before the weed moves in.

Prevent: Help grass compete by applying slow-release organic lawn fertilizer in fall and early spring. Cut your lawn high.

REMEMBER: EVERY WEED YOU IGNORE UNTIL IT FLOWERS AND PRODUCES ITS SEED WILL YIELD THOUSANDS MORE OF ITS KIND NEXT SEASON. GET 'EM WHILE THEY'RE YOUNG!