LOUISIANA HOME LAWN SERIES

A guide to maintaining a healthy Louisiana lawn

Doveweed

Description

Doveweed (*Murdannia nudiflora* [L.] Brenan) is a warm-season annual weed common throughout Louisiana. Doveweed prefers wet soils and can be an indicator of poor drainage. Seeds germinate in late spring and are usually established in lawns by late summer. Doveweed grows close to the ground and produces stolons (aboveground stems), which branch out horizontally, making mowing very difficult. If stolons are cut via mowing, they can promote further growth by spreading and establishing in other areas. Doveweed's tolerance to herbicides and ability to spread easily make it hard to control in the lawn.

Doveweed

Identification

Doveweed can be identified by its thick, grass-like leaves that resemble leaves of St. Augustine grass and centipedegrass. However, it can be distinguished from these turfgrasses by its bright-green color. It produces clusters of small blue to purple flowers that originate from a short stalk near leaf nodes. Its horizontal stolons (aboveground stems) sometimes have a light-pink to red color. Stolons and leaves typically grow in a dense, mat-like form. For more information on Doveweed identification and characterization visit the USDA Plants Database at https://plants.usda.gov.

Leaves

Flower

Seedlings

Cultural Control Practices

The best way to prevent or reduce weed encroachment is to maintain a healthy lawn through regular mowing and proper fertilization and soil pH management. Improving drainage will help reduce the incidence of doveweed infestations in the lawn. Properly maintaining a lawn through these cultural practices promotes dense and vigorous turfgrass, allowing it to better compete with weeds. Below are the recommended mowing heights and nitrogen fertility rates recommended for each turfgrass species. In addition to these lawn care practices, manual removal of weeds may also be necessary.

Turfgrass	Mowing height	Nitrogen Rate (per 1,000 ft2 per year)
Bermudagrass	1 - 2 inches	2 - 3 pounds
Centipedegrass	1 - 2.5 inches	0.5 - 2 pounds
St. Augustine grass	2.5 - 3 inches	1 - 3 pounds
Zoysia	1 - 2.5 inches	0.5 - 2 pounds

Chemical Control Practices

In addition to cultural practices, herbicide applications may be required to achieve effective weed control. Pre-emergence herbicides, such as indaziflam and dimethenamid, can be effective when applied in lawns by late spring prior to doveweed emergence. Apply post-emergent herbicides when weeds are observed in the lawn. Multiple herbicide applications are usually necessary to achieve doveweed control. Repeat applications two to four weeks apart according to label instructions. When using any herbicide, you must follow the manufacturer's labeled directions.

For more information regarding pesticides for turfgrass please reference the Louisiana Suggested Chemical Weed Control Guide at the LSU AgCenter website www.lsuagcenter.com.

	St. Augustine grass	Centipedegrass	Zoysia	Bermudagrass
Post-emergence Herbicide Active Ingredients				
atrazine	✓	✓	✓	
simazine	✓	✓	✓	✓
sulfentrazone + 2, 4-D + mecoprop + dicamba			✓	✓
sulfentrazone + metsulfuron=methyl	✓	✓	✓	✓
thiencarbazone + dicamba + iodosulfron	✓	✓	✓	✓
Pre-emergence Herbicide Active Ingredients				
dimethanamid-P	✓	✓	✓	✓
indaziflam	✓	✓	✓	✓

For information regarding weed identification and control options please contact your local LSU AgCenter Extension Parish Office. To find your local LSU AgCenter Extension Parish Office visit www.lsuagcenter.com.

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Pub. 3624-B (Online Only) 4/18
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