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# Green Up

Lawns and Landscapes

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 111

SUMMER 2008

## SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- Weeds have an advantage in the summer over dormant cool season grasses that are less competitive
- What can the customer do:
  - (1) Mow high at 2.5 to 3 inches
  - (2) Water frequently, one inch a week
  - (3) Keep mower blade sharp

## The Dog Days of Summer

The vast majority of lawns in the Roanoke region are comprised of cool season grasses. Bluegrass, rye, and fescue are the most common cool season lawn grasses. These grasses grow best at temperatures between 50°F and 75°F, conditions normally present in the spring and fall months. In the summer, hot temperatures cause these grasses to slow their growth activity and extended hot, dry conditions can cause these grasses to go dormant.

A dormant lawn can lead to increased competition from weeds—including grassy weeds. Wiregrass (Bermuda grass) is the most common summer weed and is actually a warm season grass! This “weed” thrives in the hot, dry conditions of the summer.

Weakened dormant cool season grasses are less able to fend off this undesirable weed.

Summer means hot, humid



Summer weeds wreak havoc on your lawn during the hot, dry summer months.

weather with little precipitation. These conditions take their toll on yards, often leading to weeds or a loss of color.

So what can Green Up do to

help your lawn through this trying period? Green Up's summer treatment delivers an organic-based fertilizer that helps your lawn maintain its growth and activity. Adding organic matter improves the soil's biology, reduces the amount of pesticides needed, and improves the lawn's resistance to disease.

Green-Up's organic-based fertilizer is an “Exceptional Quality” Class A organic fertilizer, as rated by the EPA. It is a slow-release product that the soil gently absorbs over time.

Additionally, Green Up will spot spray broadleaf weeds in your yard. Killing weeds will allow desirable grasses to obtain soil nutrients more easily.



Insecticide/Miticide treatments in the Summer are critical for minimizing the damage caused by insects during this stressful period.

## Insects + Heat = Trouble for Landscapes

The hot, dry conditions of summer are stressful for your trees and shrubs. Insects and mites exacerbate the stress of summer. Many of these insects feed on the xylem and phloem, the vessels that carry nutrients and water to all parts of the plant. While in-

sects and mites can cause problems throughout much of the year, their damage is magnified during the summer due to the heat and dry conditions. As these parasites feed, they further deplete the water contained in the tissues of trees and shrubs.

If you notice any problems

with your landscape, call Green Up immediately. Our Tree and Shrub program offers insecticide and miticide treatments as part of our program to eliminate these pests and prevent their devastating effects.

# The Rise of Wiregrass



Wiregrass is active during the hot, dry summer months.

With the onset of summer, wiregrass will soon appear in many yards. This unsightly plant is easily identified by long, scaly “stalks” with small grass blades coming from the main shoot.

Wiregrass is the common name for Bermuda grass. Wiregrass thrives in the hot summer months because it is a warm season grass. Its ideal growing conditions are high temperatures, high sunlight, and low amounts of precipitation. Hot, dry summer conditions cause your lawn’s desirable cool season grasses (bluegrasses, fescues) to go dormant. With ideal

growing conditions in place and reduced competition from desirable grasses, wiregrass is ready to takeover!

Control of wiregrass can prove difficult during the summer. Hand removal only eliminates the above ground runners, leaving the root system to produce more runners.

Some people use RoundUp in an area to remove wiregrass. However, RoundUp kills both wiregrass and desirable grass, resulting in a bare spot. This spot will be primed for new weeds and should be seeded as

soon as possible.

The best strategy to fight wiregrass is to encourage the vigorous growth of your cool season grasses that normally comprise your lawn. Healthy grasses develop a thick root system that naturally suppresses wiregrass growth through competition.

As part of a yearly program, Green Up’s organic-based fertilizer helps your lawn survive the hot summer, encouraging grass activity and growth to choke out wiregrass.

## Summer Diseases

Rising temperatures and increased humidity subject the lawn to a greater threat of disease. Red Thread, which typically strikes in the Spring and early Summer, causes pink or red “threads” to grow from the tips of grass blades. Brown Patch, occurring during the summer, causes irregular brown lesions on the grass blade.

A common misnomer about summer diseases is that mulching clippings during mowing will spread the disease. While these diseases are pathogenic in nature, there are simply not enough fungi on

the clippings to spread the disease in this fashion. Furthermore, it should be noted that the pathogens that cause these diseases are naturally present in the soil at low levels—summer simply provides an ideal time for them to flourish and successfully attack grass plants.

Green Up uses an organic-based fertilizer to provide optimum levels of nitrogen and phosphorous to the lawn during these taxing months. Our organic-based fertilizer has been shown to reduce the severity of both Red Thread and Brown Patch when com-

pared with synthetic fertilizer. In addition, the organic material has been shown to reduce disease in turf. Red Thread and Brown Patch both affect the blades of grass, but not the roots. As temperatures and humidity subside at the end of summer, grass plants should make a full recovery from these two diseases as they produce new shoots.

Visit our website [www.guysinpurple.com](http://www.guysinpurple.com) for more information on summer diseases, including photographs of the symptoms of each disease.



Visit <http://guysinpurple.com> for more information on summer disease and photographs of Red Thread and Brown Patch

# Hot..Dry..Summer

## Average Temperature in Roanoke, VA

June	July	August
71.9°F	76.3°F	74.8°F

## Average Number of Days per Month with Temperature Greater than 90°F in Roanoke, VA

June	July	August
5.2	10.8	8.1

Data Source: [www.noaa.gov](http://www.noaa.gov)



## Average Number of Days With Precipitation Greater than 1/2 Inch in Roanoke VA

June	July	August
2.4	2.8	2.1

Roanoke	Average	2007
Rainfall		
June	3.3"	2.6"
July	3.5"	3.2"
August	3.9"	1.5"

## Why Not Warm Season Grasses For My Yard?

As cool season grasses struggle during the summer and the yard begins to look a little rough, customers commonly ask: Why doesn't Green Up try to promote more planting of warm season grasses?

Warm season grasses, such as Bermuda and zoysia, grow best at temperatures between 70° and 95° Fahrenheit. They thrive on the hot, arid conditions of the summer, especially as cool season grasses

struggle and go dormant. To be sure, a yard completely planted with warm season grasses would look great during the heat of the summer.

However, warm season grasses aren't widely planted here due to Roanoke's climate. Warm season grasses run on opposite growth cycles compared to cool season grasses. In our area, cool season grasses enjoy approximately 9

months of ideal growing conditions and 3 months of difficult conditions (during the hot summer). A yard comprised of warm season grasses would have the opposite cycle: 3 months of great growth during the hot, dry summer months and 9 months of struggle and dormancy. Green Up uses and recommends cool season grasses to achieve maximum lawn performance throughout the ENTIRE year.

*Southwestern Virginia's prevailing climate facilitates prolonged cool season grass growth.*

## Our Organic-Based Fertilizer

The summer months can be taxing on the lawn and customers can have concerns about applications to the lawn under such difficult conditions.

Green Up's organic-based fertilizer is designed to combat these summer concerns.

Green Up uses an "Exceptional Quality" Class A organic-based fertilizer, as rated by the EPA. Although our organic-based fertilizer is labeled for use on lawns and ornamentals, the EPA has approved this class of fertilizer as safe for use on vegetables.

Adding organic matter to your

lawn improves the soil biology, reduces the amount of pesticides needed, and improves disease resistance. Our organic-based fertilizer is designed to maximize lawn performance during the summer. It is a slow release product that is gradually absorbed by the soil.





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 The Guys in Purple!

Locally owned and operated in the Roanoke, Virginia area for over 25 years, Green Up is familiar with the soil types and climate of our region. We realize what a beautiful area we live in and are committed to providing quality, responsible lawn service.

Our service programs are specifically designed with knowledge of the local environment. Our practices are environmentally friendly, as you would expect from a good neighbor.

We are a local company dedicated to providing friendly service and guarantee our work. Call the Guys in Purple today!



## Beating the Summer Blues

The harsh summer conditions can easily drive our area's cool season grasses dormant. Dormant grass is identified by widespread loss of color in the leaf blade; the grass appears yellow or even whitish. Grass plants may also crunch when stepped on. Grasses can survive their dormant stage and, with proper care, make a full recovery.

All cool season grasses, such as fescues, bluegrasses, and ryes, are prone to going dormant in the summer. These plants grow best when temperatures are between 50° and 75° Fahrenheit, a rare occurrence during the summer. Growth is further slowed by the sparse summer rainfall. Water accounts for approximately 85% of the composition of grass plants. Lack of available water slows down metabolism, reduces internal

nutrient transportation, and weakens plant strength via reduced cell pressure.

With no attention, the harsh summer conditions can kill areas in the turf. Prolonged periods with no water



The summer conditions have driven this field dormant.

will damage the turf beyond recovery. But with proper attention and care, grass can easily survive summer and recover when cooler temperatures and precipitation return. It is still important to water the lawn, even when grass appears dormant. Watering the lawn helps ward off color loss and encourages activity when conditions change. Additionally, it is important to maintain fertilization during the summer, even during dormant periods. The nutrients in Green Up's organic based fertilizer provide the essential materials for plant processes and activities. Without fertilization, plants lack the nutritional building blocks for accomplishing their daily activity. Green Up's summer treatment can help your yard survive and beat the summer heat!