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Keeping The Weeds Out – A Must!

By Rudolf Freidlander

One of the evils naturally attending any landscape endeavor is the fact that weeds need to be taken

care of. There are plenty of ways to keep the weeds out, but chances are that at some point you are going to have to do some weeding. Even the best herbicides and the best-laid plastic liners are not full proof. Inevitably it will be necessary to pull weeds by hands. But by making sure that you remove the offending plants, you will have a better-looking landscape over all, and can maintain a well-groomed yard.

The proper way to weed by hand involves getting close to the weeds. This means getting down on your hands and knees and using your hands or maybe a small handheld tool to remove the weeds. Getting close to the weeds allows you to attack each individually while causing very little, if any, harm to your more desirable plants. Additionally, while you are down there, you might as well look at your plants to ensure that they are in good health. Weeding can serve two purposes: getting rid of interlopers and allowing you to be aware of problems to your own plants before it is too late.

You should pull even the smallest of the weeds. It is easier to pull them when they are small. Their roots are less developed, and they have less chance to wreak havoc on your own plants. After all, a weed takes moisture and nutrients that are intended for you plant and then hogs them for itself. If you get the weed when it is small, then it does not have ample time to weaken your plants. It is best to pull the entire weed out, including roots. Merely snipping them at the base leaves the main problem still in the ground. You can use a small trowel to help you get under the weed. It also helps to water your garden a few hours before hand to help the soil give a little.

Pulling weeds early in the day will help you, as it is cooler and you can start the day off with some invigorating exercise. You should weed regularly, once or twice a week. You could weed every day, but many people do not have time for that. But by setting a regular weeding schedule, you can make it part of your weekly routine and make sure that small weeds do not grow into large, ugly monsters. Dead weeds can be added to the compost heap, as they do not decompose into more weeds. They merely break down into helpful organic material.

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Another thing that can help keep weeds down is mulch. Mulch keeps weeds out and it retains moisture in your garden. It is possible to use plastic mulch, and this will almost entirely keep all weeds out. However, it will not return nutrients to your soil, nor is it environmentally friendly. Organic mulch, created from the compost pile, can keep weeds down as long as it is applied thickly. Any weeds that do happen to poke through the mulch are very easy to pull. Paper can be used in mulch, as long as you let it sit in the compost pile with everything else, and it adds extra weed protection. Organic mulch is environmentally friendly, and it acts as a natural fertilizer. Effective composting practices can save you a great deal of money in your landscaping efforts.

Of course, it is possible to use weed killers and herbicides to get rid of weeds in your landscape, or to keep them out. They make use of chemicals and are often the fastest way to get rid of weeds. They are very effective: often the most effective ways to get rid of weeds. Additionally, they require very little effort to apply. It is important, however, to be careful. The chemicals are harmful and if improperly applied can damage your plants. They can also cause you trouble. Be sure that all weed killers and herbicides you use are legal and approved by the government. And read the labels to ensure that you

apply them properly and that you utilize proper protection to yourself, as some of the chemicals are harmful if you breathe them in or if they come in contact with your skin.

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Separating The Good Weeds From The Bad

By Adrian Titus

In your fight against weeds you've probably come across any number of different types. And chances are equally likely that you went straight for the herbicide, or started pulling them up as soon as you saw them. But believe it or not, some things that look like weeds can actually help be helpful to keeping your lawn green and healthy. And conversely, things that look like flowers and add color to your lawn could be hurting it.

The good

Clover is a plant that most lawn owners immediately think of as a weed that needs to be killed. But before you start digging up or spraying your clover patches, consider the fact that it may be helping your lawn. Contrary to most other weeds, clovers can actually add nutrients to your lawn, and even

Keeping The Weeds Out – A Must!

help to keep other weeds at bay. By taking up space on your lawn that could otherwise be occupied by malicious weeds, clover can promote a healthy yard. It even has the added bonus of looking nice. So next time you see clover on your lawn, before you immediately start pulling it up, think about its benefits to your lawn first.

The bad

Dandelions are to most people, a nice looking plant. They add a bit of color to the lawn, and can even be eaten. But they are actually a weed, and a bad one at that. The presence of dandelions in your lawn means that it has a problem, either with the soil or the grass itself. You should remove dandelions as soon as you see them, because they are deep rooted and take up a lot of space that should be used by your grasses roots. They take up more than a fair share of nutrients and water as well, making it harder for nearby grass to grow the way it should. After pulling or killing the dandelions, be sure to check the soil and maybe add some fertilizer to it to ensure your neighboring grasses grow in strong.

The ugly

While not technically a weed, when different species of grass start growing on the same lawn the effect can be unattractive. Just imagine a whole lawn of perfect Bermuda grass, with spots of wild growing meadow grass. It throws off the whole look of your yard. It is risky to kill the intruding grass with herbicides, because it can kill your existing lawn as well. You need to make sure you get the whole root pulled up, or the grass can easily grow back. After you get the other grass out, make sure your soil has the appropriate nutrients and plant the type of grass that is in the rest of your lawn. Be sure to keep an eye out for intruding grass, because you may not consider it as a weed.

Not all weeds are created equal, as we can see. Some are malicious, such as the dandelion, while others can actually help your lawn stay healthy like clover. And still others aren't even weeds, but can make your lawn look unattractive. Whatever the case, be sure to be constantly checking and maintaining your lawn and weeds won't sneak up on you.

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