



**SPRING**



# Turf Matters

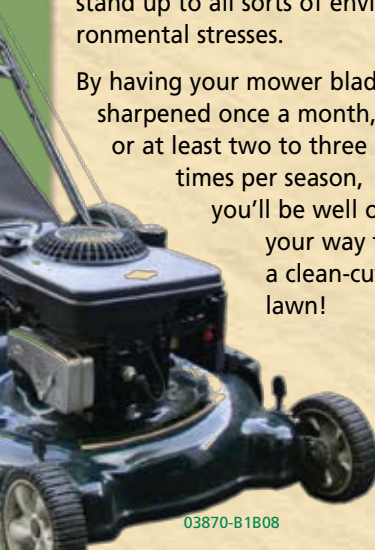
## SHARPEN UP FOR HEALTHIER GRASS

By now, top growth has resumed in your lawn, and you'll soon be back on a mowing schedule if you aren't already. Before the first mowing, however, it's important to make sure that your mower blade is good and sharp.

Neglecting to change or sharpen your mower blade regularly can be tough on your lawn, with the blade literally becoming a "blunt object" after repeated uses. Dull mower blades, rather than providing a clean, even cut, end up ripping and shredding the tips of grass plants.

These "ripped tips" quickly turn brown, giving the entire lawn a less-than-attractive appearance. Plus, shredded tips make it easier for diseases to infect the turf while compromising the lawn's ability to stand up to all sorts of environmental stresses.

By having your mower blade sharpened once a month, or at least two to three times per season, you'll be well on your way to a clean-cut lawn!



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## Are Broadleaf Weeds Beating up Your Lawn?

### TAKE A STAND AGAINST THESE SPRINGTIME BULLIES

There's nothing dandy about dandelions. The same can be said for any broadleaf weed that invades a lawn, whether it be plantain, clover or spurge. Their seeds are everywhere, finding their way into our lawns by wind, water, on animals and even on the bottoms of our shoes. With more than 2,000 species of weeds in North America, no lawn is immune.

#### PREVENT AN UPRISING!

Though broadleaf weeds are very aggressive, their numbers can be minimized by keeping your lawn thick and healthy with good maintenance practices. The idea behind this is that a dense stand of turf will leave less room, sun and warmth for weeds to grow in.

Mowing higher (removing no more than 1/3 of the grass blade each time), watering sufficiently in the absence of rainfall (1" to 1 1/2" per week), treating for insects and disease when needed, and regular fertilization will all encourage a thicker lawn with a stronger root system that is less likely to be beaten up (or beaten out) by broadleaf weeds.

Even so, the occasional weed may still make an appearance in your lawn. That's when treatment with an herbicide becomes necessary.

#### SPOT TREATING WEEDS

In most cases, broadleaf weeds need to be treated with a post-emergent herbicide rather than a pre-emergent herbicide. Unlike pre-emergents,

which can prevent grassy weeds like crabgrass from sprouting in the first place, post-emergents must be applied when weeds are actively growing. Keep in mind that control isn't immediate with post-emergents; it can take up to three weeks for the weeds to completely disappear. Repeat applications may also be required if new broadleaf weed seeds happen to germinate.

Will our lawns ever be completely free of broadleaf weeds? It's unlikely. However, by combining proper maintenance practices with post-emergent spot treatments, we can significantly reduce the impact of these pests on our turf.



*Broadleaf weeds can pop up at any time during the growing season.*

#### KEY POINTS

- All lawns are susceptible to broadleaf weeds.
- Keeping turf thick and healthy is the first step in discouraging weed growth.
- Post-emergent herbicides can control broadleaf weeds that are actively growing.



## Making Your Own POTTING MIX

Are you a container gardener looking to save money on potting mix? If so, you might want to consider making your own.

For small- to medium-sized containers, a good mix consists of 50% to 60% Canadian peat moss, 20% to 25% coarse sand or perlite, and 20% to 25% ground pine bark. Or, you can experiment with the following mixes:

- Equal parts peat moss, pine bark and perlite
- Equal parts peat moss, coarse sand and pine bark
- Two parts peat moss, one part perlite and one part coarse sand

For larger containers, coarse blends of ground, composted fir or pine bark mixed with coarse peat moss work well. And if you'll be growing shrubs or small trees, it's a good idea to add 5% to 10% garden soil to support the plant.

Trying out a variety of different mixes will help to determine the best one for your specific needs. Just be sure that the ingredients you use are somewhat moist before mixing. Also, it's a good idea to add a timed-release fertilizer to your mix when planting.



*You can save money on container gardening with homemade potting mix.*

# Growing Fantastic Flowers

## PROPER WATERING AND FERTILIZING ARE KEY

We're often asked how frequently flowers should be watered and fertilized. Though it would be nice if there was a hard-and-fast rule that worked for all flower types, there isn't. Watering and feeding needs vary from flower to flower.

### WHEN TO WATER

Providing too much or too little water (especially when hot summer weather arrives) can result in less-than-satisfactory blooms. If you're unsure when watering is needed, consider these guidelines:

- Annuals have shallow roots, so they dry out more quickly. Keep soil moist, but not too soggy.
- Perennials need less water since they have deeper roots. It's OK to let the soil dry out between waterings.
- Certain flower types shouldn't be watered on flower heads or leaves (the care instructions that come with them usually indicate this).

#### KEY POINTS

- Maintenance needs vary from flower to flower.
- It's important not to provide too much or too little water and fertilizer.

### FERTILIZER FREQUENCY

Proper feeding will give your flowering plants the energy they need to produce bloom after bloom. Here are some fertilization tips to follow for feeding success:

- Perennials should be fertilized once they start blooming.
- Annuals do best when fertilized as they're getting established and again during mid season.
- If leaves are yellowing, this often means that fertilizer is needed.
- If a granular or powdered fertilizer is used, it should be watered in after application.

There's no denying the pleasure and peace that a water feature can bring to your landscape. The sights and sounds of moving water can make any setting more relaxing and enjoyable, and water features look great in almost any landscape.

Sometimes, however, property owners are reluctant to add water features out of concern for children or pets falling in. If this has been holding you back, you may want to try a "disappearing" water feature.

With these innovative structures, water is pumped through the interior of the feature, runs down the outside, and disappears into the ground where it goes through a filter and pump system and starts over again. Depending on your specific needs and desires, your disappearing water feature can be as simple as a small urn in gravel or as elaborate as a huge, cascading waterfall.

## INNOVATION IN

## A DISAPPEARING



*With the right watering and fertilizing practices, you can look forward to a fantastic flower display this year!*

## Becoming Eco-Friendly

As more and more people embrace the “Green Movement” by taking steps to reduce their negative effects on the environment, many are looking for ways to practice “eco-friendly” gardening. The following tips from the Environmental Protection Agency are sure to make any property more kind to the environment we all share.

- Untreated wood and leaf waste can be shredded into chip form for use as a mulch in planting beds and around trees and shrubs.
- Make a point of recycling used oil and tires from lawn and garden equipment.
- Keep lawn mowers and other gardening equipment in efficient operating condition by performing regular maintenance

according to the owner’s manual. This will help to save fuel and protect air quality.

- Leave grass clippings on your lawn or use a mulching mower. The clippings will return nutrients to the soil instead of taking up space in landfills.
- Try to use garden tools that are made from recycled content. Examples include garden hoses made from old tires, stepping stones made from old glass bottles, and hand tools made from recycled plastic.
- If you want to replace a plant that’s still healthy, consider donating it to a community garden or school. Or, offer it to a neighbor.



*Liven up your landscape with a disappearing water feature!*

Besides being safe for children and pets, disappearing water features have few maintenance needs, and there aren’t any open bodies of water to collect algae and other debris. Consider one as a magical addition to your landscape!

WATER FEATURES

LANDSCAPING ACT

## Just What is a Pergola, Anyway?

If you’d like to add a great conversation piece to your landscape, a pergola makes a versatile choice. This wooden-framed structure, also known as an architectural arbor, often includes a latticework roof or trellis structure where climbing plants can be trained to grow.

In the backyard, a pergola can be built over a patio or seating area to provide a bit of shade and shelter. When you want to direct traffic from one part of your property to the next, a pergola can turn an otherwise drab walkway into an intriguing passageway. You might even install a pergola over your front sidewalk as a unique way to welcome guests into your home.

As far as climbing plants go, morning glory, grapes, hardy kiwi, rose, clematis and wisteria are all good to work with. Consider using multiple plant types for

variety, along with hanging baskets for added visual interest.

However you choose to use it, a pergola will make a great addition to your property!

### KEY POINTS

- Consider using these wooden-framed structures with climbing plants.
- Depending on your needs, pergolas can be used in a variety of locations throughout your yard.





**Reward yourself: Spread the good news  
about TurfMasters and **SAVE \$20!****

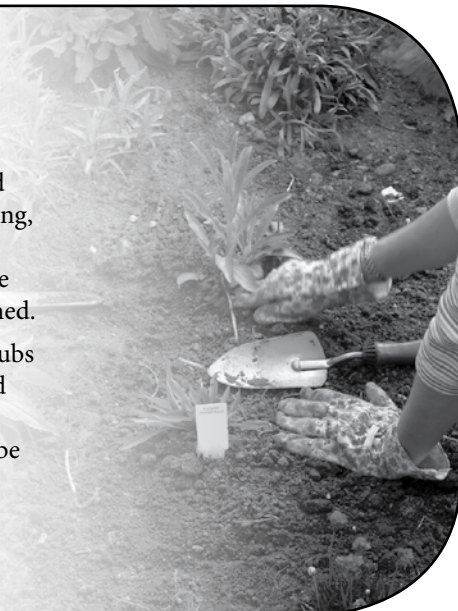
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Can Do For You!

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This program applies to new clients only, and Referral Fees may not exceed the price per service. New clients must receive our Full Lawn Program to qualify for referral discount.

## Quick Tips for Spring

- If you haven't already, take a walk around your property and pick up any sticks or other debris that may have accumulated in your lawn and planting beds over the winter.
- Any dead plant materials should be removed from last year's gardens.
- Perennials can be added to bulb beds now. It's a good idea to use perennials that start blooming just as bulb blooms fade (to detract from the fading bulb foliage).
- This is also a good time to dig up and divide emerging perennials. The extras can be replanted to expand your garden's color.
- Consider adding new basics to your landscape in the form of larger trees and shrubs. Choose plants for shade, screening, attracting wildlife, or simply for their unique charms. New plantings should be watered regularly until they get established.
- It's time to add mulch to your trees, shrubs and planting beds. Beds should be edged 3" to 4" deep with a sharp spade before mulching, and the mulch depth should be no more than 4".



## WORD SEARCH

D	P	H	I	B	I	S	C	U	S	L	C	P	C	D
A	I	O	C	K	P	C	C	G	I	R	E	H	S	F
A	E	H	P	J	W	W	V	L	O	T	R	G	U	L
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P	A	U	X	Y	V	C	J	R	O	O	A	R	A	K
D	M	H	T	N	I	C	A	Y	H	L	N	L	M	R
G	A	R	D	E	N	I	A	I	K	R	E	I	I	G
O	R	S	E	O	T	E	L	T	S	I	M	T	A	L

### Can You Find the 20 Flower Names Hidden in This Puzzle?

*Words can be found forwards, backwards, horizontally, vertically and diagonally.*

- |                |           |
|----------------|-----------|
| AFRICAN VIOLET | LILAC     |
| AZALEA         | LILY      |
| BEGONIA        | MARIGOLD  |
| CHRYSANTHEMUM  | MISTLETOE |
| CROCUS         | ORCHID    |
| DAISY          | PANSY     |
| GARDENIA       | PETUNIA   |
| GERANIUM       | POPPY     |
| HIBISCUS       | ROSE      |
| HYACINTH       | SUNFLOWER |

