



Turf Diagnostics

Problems



GRAY SNOW MOLD

Gray snow mold appears around the time of snow melt after long, deep compacted snow cover (typically more than 80 days). Gray snow mold appears in roughly circular bleached patterns up to 2 feet in diameter. Grass is often matted and surrounded by a white to gray cottony mass known as mycelium, especially in the early morning hours. While unsightly, it rarely kills the turf.

Solutions

As springtime temperatures rise, it will likely go away on its own. With raking, fertilizing and reseeding, the lawn will recover quickly, without the use of a fungicide. On higher-end properties, fungicides labeled for snow mold can be applied before the initial snow cover.



Bayleton 1G, Headway G, PrimeraOne
Propiconazole 14.3%



RED THREAD

The presence of red or pink webbing or threads is the tell-tale sign of red thread disease. Red thread is most often brought on by low levels on nitrogen in the soil while temperatures are still relatively cool in the spring.

Maintain consistent nitrogen levels by using fertilizers with high amounts of slow-release. Lower quality fertilizers may not last as long as needed during a cool, rainy spring.



Bayleton 1G, Headway G, PrimeraOne
Propiconazole 14.3%



DOLLAR SPOT

The name comes from the silver-dollar sized straw-colored spots this disease causes on putting greens. On higher-cut lawns the shapes are more irregular. Dollar spot usually shows up when nitrogen levels are low and turf growth slows down. It is easily recognized by the tan-white lesions that run across the width of the blade, eventually forming an hourglass shape across the leaf blade.

Maintain consistent nitrogen levels by using fertilizers with high amounts of slow-release. Lower quality fertilizers may not last as long as needed during a cool, rainy spring.



Bayleton 1G, Headway G, PrimeraOne
Propiconazole 14.3%



FAIRY RING

Look for an arc or circle of lush green grass and/or toad-stool or puffball mushrooms. The rings may be anywhere as large as 15-60 feet in diameter and usually occur in the same place each year, with the ring expanding outward. The lush grass is from a release of nutrients as organic matter decomposes below the turf—commonly from the below-ground remnants of a tree stump or some other buried organic matter.

For best long-term results, digging out whatever is decomposing under the ground is the true remedy, although not practical in every situation. Regular fertilization with a quality slow-release can help to mask the symptoms by greening up the entire lawn.



Headway G and Strobe 50WG



GRAY LEAF SPOT

This is a foliar disease that mainly affects annual and perennial ryegrasses, tall fescue and warm-season St. Augustine grass. Damage is usually noticed during the summer months when temperatures are over 80 degrees, humidity is high, and there is prolonged leaf wetness. Infected leaves can have water-soaked lesions and can turn yellow. The youngest leaves often have a characteristic fishhook shape. Gray leaf spot is most severe on young seedlings and can spread across an entire lawn in only a few days if conditions favor it.

When conditions favor gray leaf spot, avoid watering late in the day or during the night so as to avoid prolonged leaf wetness. If fungicide applications are needed, be sure to apply them on a preventative basis as the disease is very difficult to control once established.



Headway G and Strobe 50WG



BROWN PATCH

This fungus is most prevalent on ryegrass and tall fescue during periods of high humidity and warmer weather, when nighttime temperatures exceed 65-degrees. At the outset, the turf will begin to appear water-soaked with a dark purplish color. Sometimes the disease will create a purplish-gray "smoke ring" border or a "frogs-eye" with green grass in the center. Leaves will show tan lesions with brown edges.

Brown patch prefers nitrogen and moisture so limit nitrogen applications in the summer on susceptible grasses, especially tall fescue. If summer applications are to be made, be sure to use a fertilizer with a quality slow-release nitrogen source to limit the likelihood of a breakout following a warm thunderstorm or even an over-used irrigation system.



Headway G, Strobe 50WG and Endow 2SC



PYTHIUM

Pythium fungi can infest all commonly-grown cool-season grasses but is especially an issue on newly seeded perennial ryegrass. When pythium attacks foliage, the disease is called cottony blight, grease spot, or pythium blight. Outbreaks occur most often during hot, humid weather and can spread quickly. Pythium can also cause root and crown rots in cool, warm or hot weather with high moisture.

Pythium is very difficult to control once the disease has begun, so prevention is key. Use fertilizers with quality slow-release nitrogen sources (for example, MESA) to avoid high amounts of soluble nitrogen working in the hottest parts of summer. Avoid overwatering, especially at night, and wait until the cooler weather to plant rye-based seed mixtures.



Subdue Maxx and Mefenoxam 2AQ



RUST

Severely infected plants have an appearance similar to rusty-iron. When infected leaves are rubbed between your fingers or walked upon, an orange powder collects on fingers or shoes. Normally a late summer or early fall disease, rust does not generally kill the turf but it may weaken it to the point that other problems develop.

Adequate nitrogen and irrigation to maintain growth through late summer will help prevent this. Fungicides are used only as a last resort since the next application of fertilizer will almost always push this disease out. Using fertilizers with high-quality slow-release nitrogen sources will go a long way towards preventing the development of this disease, as well as many others.

