

## Garden Column for the Salisbury Post

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Fescue lawn care is especially difficult because of the ongoing water situation and maintenance practices that must take place in a narrow time frame during the Spring. Now is the time to act on lawn maintenance before warm weather arrives. Below are a few questions posed from the public about these practices?

Question: What are the seeding rates for fescue seed? Answer: Over-seeding thin areas use about 3 pounds of seed per 1000 square feet; a new lawn or bare areas should receive about 7 pounds per 1000 square feet.

Question: How soon after my fescue germinates can I cut the grass? Answer: Fescue should be cut when the newly emerging grass seedlings reach about 4 inches. Raise the mower as high as it will go and mow. Make sure the blade is very sharp.

Question: Can I core-aerate my yard now? Answer: Under normal circumstance I would recommend core aeration only in the fall and every other year, however if your lawn is extremely weak or non-existent it is often the best method of getting fertilizer into the root zone. Coring allows fertilizer and seed to penetrate without plowing. Don't forget to add straw mulch to conserve moisture.

Question: How do I kill wild onions in my yard? Answer: The wild onions are most likely wild garlic. Two applications of broadleaf weed killers such as Trimec, Weed-B-Gon or Image will eliminate the weed. Herbicide applications 10 days apart usually give satisfactory results. Pre-measured hose-on weed control herbicides work well for t hose with small lawns.

Question: What is that purple weed in my yard that seems to be taking over? Answer: The weed is either henbit or deadnettle, both related and a royal pain. These along with other weeds such as chickweed and dandelion are plaguing our lawns. Post emergence herbicides such as Trimec or Weed-B-Gon will and other brands control the weed, however during flowering the weed is difficult to kill. Again, Pre-measured hose-on weed control herbicides work well for those with small lawns.

Question: I sprayed my weeds last week and they are not dying. What is the problem? Answer: Blooming broadleaf annuals are difficult and often impossible to kill quickly. These weeds are in the process of producing seed and not growing and therefore not adsorbing herbicides.

Question: Can I still apply a pre-emergence herbicide in my fertilizer to control crabgrass? Answer: Yes, but do it now. The soil is warming quickly and the effort will be of no benefit if the grass is already emerging.

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