

No Easy Solutions For Ground Pearls

Dear Plant Doctor: I was certainly interested in your recent article in the newspaper about the insect you called a ground pearl. My yard is being ruined by those pests. The local cooperative extension agent plus two lawn care companies identified my lawn problem as being caused by ground pearls. None could offer any help.

Am I to just sit and watch the large blotches of dead grass in my backyard just keep getting bigger and bigger? Can you suggest anything to rid my back lawn of these pests?

You mentioned that ground pearls have not been reported to damage bahia grass or carpet grass. Where can one obtain such grass seed?

Would you recommend removing the top four inches or so of soil in the infested area(s) and replacing it with non-infested soil? Would a controlled burn on the infested area roast the pearls to death?

Your reply will be greatly appreciated.

Answer: You have asked some good questions. Biological systems are complex and the information on many of these problems is limited. To my knowledge, no pesticide, management program or cultural practice (e.g. burning) exists that will eliminate ground pearls from severely infesting lawn grass.

THE PLANT DOCTOR

C. BRUCE WILLIAMS
Extension Area
Turf Specialist



Soil removal and new topsoil replacement may work to eliminate the pests, but this method should not be viewed as a long term solution to ground pearl infestation. Researchers have even tried soil fumigation to eliminate the pest but with little success.

The encysted ground pearl juveniles are encased in an almost impermeable coat of chitin (the same material that makes up shrimp shells). When conditions are just right, adult ground pearls emerge from the pearl stage in early summer. The adult form is easily killed with a number of insecticides but unless the juvenile pearl stage is controlled damage will continue to be a problem. The juvenile insect can stay in the soil for years.

A sound management program coupled with an irrigation system seems to be the only way to have a decent centipede grass lawn that is

not infested with ground pearls.

Grass that is exposed to water stress, poor fertility, severe disease or insect infestations seem to show the most severe damage due to ground pearls. A lawn that is managed properly will usually show less damage, although damage may still be unacceptable to the owner.

Bahia grass (*Paspalum notatum*) seems to be tolerant of ground pearls and other root-infesting pests (like nematodes) because of the grass's unique root anatomy of physiology. If the problem is as severe as you describe, a bahia grass lawn may be a solution you want to consider.

Bahia grass or carpet grass seed can usually be obtained at any farm or seed supply store.

Progress is being made in the selection of new grasses for the home lawn. I just received a sample of St. Augustine grass seed that a seed company is promoting. Up until recently, the only way to propagate St. Augustine grass was by plugs, sprigs or sod. A commercial zoysia grass seed mix is also being evaluated. If these grasses do as well as they are advertised, they will be wonderful new additions to the lawn grass inventory.

Send your gardening questions to The Plant Doctor, P.O. Box 109, Bolivia, N.C. 28422.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

BOLIVIA LIONS CLUB was recognized as "most improved" club, at the District 31-H awards banquet. From the left above are individual award recipients Donnie Kopp, Cecil Robbins, Fred Lesh, Marie Potter and Alice Lesh.

Bolivia Lions 'Most Improved'

Bolivia Lions Club was honored as "most improved club" at the District 31-H awards banquet June 29 in Goldsboro in recognition of its outstanding achievements during the past year.

Five individual members also

won recognition. Alice Lesh received the Governor's Award for meeting all new member requirements during the 1990-91 year.

Cecil Robbins, president for the 1990-91 club year, accepted the most improved club award and 100 percent president award.

Also receiving 100 percent awards for achieving all the goals of their respective offices were Marie Potter, secretary; Donnie Kopp, treasurer; and Fred Lesh, zone chairman.

Fred Lesh is the club's incoming president.

PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

Orrock To Head State Association

Jamie Orrock, director of Brunswick County's Department of Social Services, has been elected president of the N.C. Social Services Association.



ORROCK

The organization consists of approximately 4,000 social services employees from 96 departments across the state. Members lobby for changes that affect social services workers. Orrock has been an outspoken opponent of a mounting wall of paperwork that faces DSS workers. Simplification of client applications is a universal concern in North Carolina, he said.

"I hope it's going to be good news for Brunswick County," said Orrock of his selection.

Orrock will speak on behalf of the association during his one-year tenure. He also plans to bring Brunswick County's concerns to the attention of DSS workers statewide.

"Brunswick County is pretty typical of the other 96 counties," he said. "If you look across the state, we have many of the same problems that others are facing."

Turf Agent Cited

Bruce Williams, an area cooperative extension agent, received two awards at the annual meeting of the North Carolina Association of County Agricultural Extension Agents held July 12 in Greensboro.

Williams works as area specialized turfgrass agent in Brunswick, New Hanover and Pender counties.



WILLIAMS

In statewide competition, he received first place in the Turfgrass/Horticulture Communications Program for a golf course workers training manual developed for workers on courses in southeastern North Carolina. The entry advances

to regional and national competition. At the state level Williams received a \$50 cash prize and a plaque.

He won second place in the Personal Column category of the Public Information Programs for his *Plant Doctor* column that appears in several newspapers in eastern North and South Carolina, including *The Brunswick Beacon*. A \$25 cash prize accompanied the award.

Two Attend Workshop

Foy M. Crary and Virginia Detric, teachers at Union Primary School in Shalotte, were among 40 social studies teachers who attended the 1991 Summer Geography Institute for Teachers (Grades K-3) June 16-22 at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington.

The institute focused on five themes of geography: location, place, human-environment relationships, movement and region. Teachers were trained to help children begin to understand where people live and how and why they relate to their particular environmental settings.

The workshop provided professional instruction in geographic education and geography curriculum materials for teachers to take back to class.

Cureton Graduates

Airman Christine T. Cureton has graduated from the personnel specialist course at Kessler Air Force Base, Biloxi, Miss.

She is the daughter of William T. and Janice I. Cureton of Boiling Spring Lakes.

The airman is a 1989 graduate of South Brunswick High School.

LaFrance Returns

Marine Gunnery Sgt. Keith L. LaFrance, son of Louis V. LaFrance of Calabash, recently returned from Operation Desert Storm and Operation Sea Angel while serving at Marine Corps Base, Camp Pendleton, Ca.

Operation Sea Angel employed more than 7,000 Army, Marine Corps and Air Force personnel to assist in a massive relief effort to Bangladesh's southern coast and

nearby islands, providing much needed food and supplies to approximately 1.7 million people recovering from a cyclone that claimed 138,000 lives.

LaFrance joined the Marine Corps Reserves in June 1970.

Weston Completes

Pvt. 1st Class Dwon L. Weston has completed basic training at Fort Jackson, Columbia, S.C.

During the training, students received instruction in drill and ceremonies, weapons, map reading, tactics, military courtesy and justice, first aid and Army history and traditions.

Weston is the son of Lenwood Hooper and Shelia A. Weston of Leland.

He graduated from North Brunswick High School in 1990.

Serves As Ambassador

Kristi Michelle Bellamy, a rising junior at South Brunswick High School, recently served as a high school student science ambassador to the Soviet Union during a four-week "People to People International" program.

Selected on the basis of academic merit and interest in science, she was the only student from North Carolina to participate in the applied sciences portion of the program, which promotes increased understanding of cultures other than one's own.

She visited various parts of the country as well as completing classroom studies for which she may earn college credits.

Kristi is the daughter of Verida Bellamy, formerly of Southport, and the granddaughter of Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Bellamy of Southport.

Ioanes Re-Enlists

Staff Sgt. Michael J. Ioanes has re-enlisted in the U.S. Army for six years.

Ioanes is a team chief at Fort

Riley, Kan.

He is the son of Edward H. and Shirley L. Iones of Calabash.

The sergeant is a 1967 graduate of Highland High School, Medina, Ohio.

Harris Joins Staff

Wayne Harris, of Southport, has joined the Brunswick County office of the N.C. Adult Probation and Parole in Bolivia.



HARRIS

Harris, 29, is the son of Catherine Harris of Bolivia. He is a 1980 graduate of South Brunswick High School and received a bachelor's degree in communications from Rust College in Holly Springs, Miss.

He has worked as a Southport police officer for five years and served in the U.S. Army Reserves in Raleigh from 1984 to 1991, earning a rank of lieutenant.

As case officer, Harris will work to help rehabilitate persons placed on probation by the courts or released from jail on parole. "It's the other side of the fence," Harris said, referring to his law enforcement experience. "As a police officer, you take people to jail and that's it. Now, I'll be helping them to return to society and basically to stay out of trouble."

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Leland Rewards Summer Readers

Young readers responded to the Summer Reading Club "Outer Space—Calling All Readers" theme this summer at the Leland Branch Library, turning in projects that ranged from drawings to Ryan Sullivan's lighted, revolving model of the solar system.

Ryan won first place in the club project contest, as well as a director's choice award for having the most scientific project, said spokesman Lisa Milligan. Tying for second place were Camille Wilmoth and Stephanie Ganey.

Top readers for the summer also earned recognition that included certificates and incentives.

Ryan placed first in the ages 6 to 9 category, with 185 books read. Christie Wright finished second, with 165 books; and Michael

Wright, third, with 160 books.

In the ages 10 to 13 category, winners were Camille Wilmoth, first, 55 books; Cindy Scroggin, second, 29 books; and Stephanie Ganey, third, 10 books.

Literacy Council Seeking Donations

Volunteers for the Brunswick County Literacy Council will hold a "bucket shake" in front of area supermarkets Aug. 2 and 3, seeking donations.

The donations will help pay some of the operating expenses for the program, which provides free materials and free private reading help for adults in the county.

To volunteer or for more information, call the BCLC at 754-7323 or 278-6355.

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