

: : SOUTHERN LAWN TIMES



A Monthly E-Newsletter for Father and Son Pest and Lawn Solutions

March 2024

What we are doing this month and why

This month we will continue to apply our cool season fertilizer formula which contains potassium. Potassium encourages root growth which enables the grass to store carbohydrates for when it comes out of dormancy. We are also continuing to apply pre-emergent weed control to suppress winter weeds. We will apply pre-emergent weed control throughout the year to keep constant pressure on weed populations. We are also applying post emergent weed control to control actively growing weeds.

The only turf destroying insect that is still active this time of year is mole crickets and we will treat them as needed. Disease is most active between 70° and 80°. We will keep a close eye out for disease activity as we transition from spring into summer and apply fungicide as needed when we notice disease activity occurring.

NEW IMPROVED SHRUB AND ORNAMENTAL SERVICE FOR 2024!

For those of you who have service for your shrubs and ornamental plants, you will now receive an extra visit each month from a technician specifically for your shrubs and ornamentals. We believe by assigning a separate technician specifically to look at your landscape plants each month, we can improve our quality of plant care.



NEW QUESTION ABOUT TICS FROM A FOLLOWER

Hello, I saw your post on the Navarre page, I am looking to see if you can give some advice. We have been having a problem with brown dog ticks, do you have any suggestions on how to get rid of them? The dogs go out back and pick them up and bring them inside. We just moved from Alaska so we don't know anything about ticks and we've done a little research but just want a good way to get them gone. Thank you!

HERE'S MY reply:

Ticks can be a little difficult to deal with because they are opportunistic parasites that climb trees or shrubs and patiently wait for a host to pass by to drop onto. And they can survive several months without a host. Because they don't have a preferred habitat and can be virtually anywhere above ground level, it's hard to treat every shrub, tree and limb in a given area that could harbor a tick. Although doing a broadcast insecticide treatment could help, the best defense against ticks is to keep your pet treated with a veterinarian recommend product for fleas and ticks.

WHY ISN'T MY GRASS GREENER YET?

When warm season turf grasses go dormant for the winter, they stop producing new growth and eventually most of the grass blades the lawn had at the end of fall, die off and turn brown. Then in the spring, the grass comes out of dormancy and starts producing new grass blades to replace the old ones that died off. A couple factors determine how soon grass comes out of dormancy in the spring and starts producing new, green growth, temperature and the type of grass. All warm season turf grasses require warm weather before producing new growth and turning green, however, some types of grasses respond to warm weather more quickly than others. Zoysia is usually the slowest type of grass to respond and green up in the spring. Parts of my own Zoysia lawn are still mostly brown, while areas with St. Augustine and centipede are already green.

It doesn't benefit the grass to try to rush the process by applying fertilizer before it comes out of dormancy on its own. Grass that is still mostly dormant doesn't have the ability to absorb much nutrients and thereby any fertilizer applied before the grass is out of dormancy is mostly wasted. Patience is the key when waiting for your lawn to turn green in the spring. Once 80% of the lawn is green and out of dormancy, fertilizer can be applied and fully utilized by the grass. So, if your lawn isn't as green as you'd like it to be right now, it won't be much longer! Warmer temperatures are here and you will see the grass responding.

WHAT ARE THESE MOUNDS COMING UP IN MY YARD?

Recently a follower sent me a picture along with this question:

We have these coming up in our yard and they have bees living in the ground that I'm worried is going to sting my kids.. I follow your page and came to your seminars and was going to see if you could tell me how to treat them and what they are ?

Here was my reply:

These are parasitic wasp mounds. These small wasps burrow down into the ground to find an insect to paralyze and lay their eggs on and then fly away. Later on this year, the eggs will hatch, the larvae will feed on the insect and later turn into a wasp. The adult wasps are not aggressive and are not using the holes as nests. As long as you don't accidentally step on one of the wasps, they shouldn't bother you.



Watering Instructions

Irrigation systems should be primed and ready to go. As of the time of this writing, the first week in March, it is not necessary to apply any supplemental irrigation yet because of the cooler temperatures and frequent rain. As the temperature begins to increase and or the weather pattern becomes drier, begin watering once or twice a week and increase the frequency as the temperatures get warmer and we experienced drier weather.