

Weed of The Week

Broadleaf Plantain

Enemy #1 to turf growers and managers. This week the weed of the week features Broadleaf Plantain. With its low growing habit and very broad leaves, this weed can easily crowd out turf grass species that grow in our yards, landscaping, and golf courses. Broadleaf plantain originated in Eurasia and has been distributed throughout most of the United States. Broadleaf Plantain prefers compacted disturbed soils. Common areas that this weed can be found in are heavy foot traffic areas in yards or around buildings and heavily mowed turf such as golf courses or turf farms. Broadleaf Plantain is a perennial with large leathery leaves that taper to a petiole with a green base. This weed reproduces mainly from seed but has been known to grow from fragmented roots. The flower is on a long upright stem, flowering takes place from June to September with one plant producing up to 14,000 seeds that can remain viable for 60 years! Controlling plantain can be a challenge, but there are options. In lawns, it is critical to have a good strand of grass to compete. Aeration of the soil helps in turf species since Broadleaf Plantain loves compacted soils. Make sure to clean the lawn mower after use considering the main form of reproduction is by seed. Digging up the plant can be effective; it is critical to get the whole root system. Herbicides can also be used and the best time for application is early spring and fall. Herbicides that can be used include Gallery for preemergent control, 2-4-D, dicamba, fluroxapyr, quinclorac, and sulfentrazone. All these herbicides should be used after they turf has received at least three rounds of mowing.

