

# the LawnShed

All you need for the perfect backyard

## A LAWN LOVER'S GUIDE

### *In this issue:*

#### **A BARRIER AGAINST WEEDS**

We discuss how you can create a barricade against lawn weeds this Autumn, making your Winter that much easier

#### **GOING DORMANT**

Ever wondered why your lawn loses its colour during Autumn and into Winter. We cover why your lawn is not that dissimilar to trees that drop their leaves

#### **PIGMENT VS FERTILISER?**

One of the great debates of lawn lovers, we cover what they are and where you should consider using each

#### **KNOW THY LAWN**

Did you know that the weeds that pop up in your lawn and thrive can actually tell you a lot about your lawn?

## A LAWN LOVER'S GUIDE

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# Editor's Note



As the growing season comes to an end, I wanted to start this edition by saying thank you. It has honestly been so good hearing from so many of you.

During the Spring and Summer of 2023 and 2024, I have seen many lawn transformations! I am so much of a lawn nerd I have felt the pain of the weed images, the damaged areas and the diseased areas that you have shared with me. I have shown my wife, kids and close friends the photos and stories we've lived together and I'm happy I was able to be a part of your lawn journeys this Spring and Summer.

After all it wasn't a particularly easy one, with high rainfall and more normal temperatures creating huge amounts of growth and humidity.

So, what is coming for Autumn and Winter?

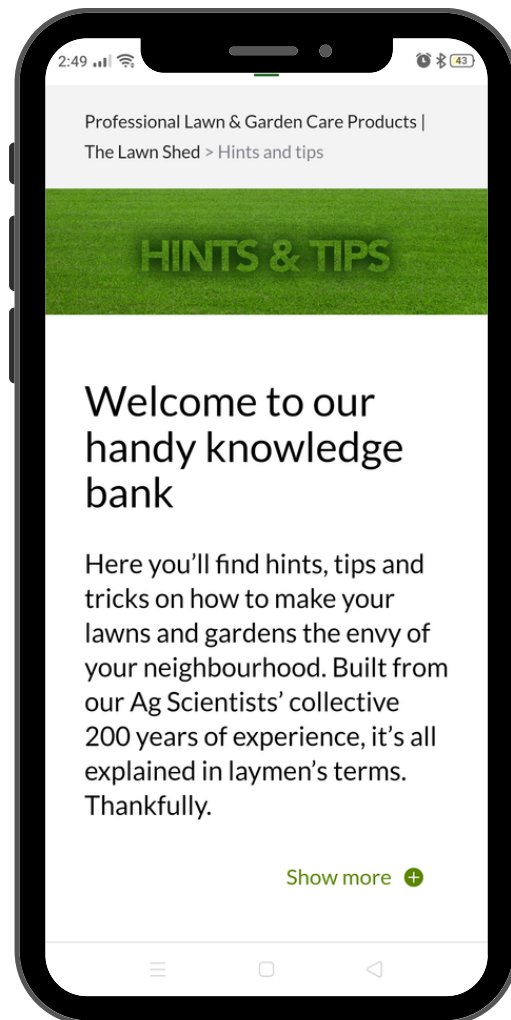
You will have to read more into our guide to get an idea of what's in store, but as a sneak peak, I've heard reports Winter Grass is still alive in some areas, not the usual but we review how that's possible in our pest profile. Of course, we show you how to prevent it and treat other common Winter weeds.

We also cover the processes occurring within the turfgrass plant, leading into Winter, how we can change these and, how we can use these to our advantage.

In short, you're just going to have to read more.

If this guide leaves things unanswered or if you would like to suggest some topics for our next guide, then please contact me at [help@thelawnshed.com.au](mailto:help@thelawnshed.com.au) because, I love talking lawn.

Ian Thompson  
Master of Agriculture (Turf Management)



## Create a Barricade: Against Winter Grass

### What is a pre-emergent?

A pre-emergent is a herbicide which is watered into the soil and creates a barrier within the soil in the zone where the weeds like to germinate.

### How does a pre-emergent herbicide work?

As the weed seed of Winter Grass starts to germinate the first thing it does is produce a root, that's even before it produces a leaf. This first root is called the radicle, it goes looking for water but finds the herbicide and sucks it up, not knowing it has just caused its own demise.

### When should I apply?

As **Barricade** and **Spartan** are pre-emergent herbicides the best time to apply is before the weeds like Winter Grass emerge. It's best to apply and have the most active ingredient in the soil when the common (and least liked) weeds are due to germinate. This means an application in March to prevent against the March germination of Winter Grass and again in September to prevent against the dreaded Summer weeds like Crows Foot, Crab Grass and Summer Grass.

# PEST PROFILE: WINTER GRASS



## What is Winter Grass?

Winter Grass is a tufted lime green grass that becomes very big throughout the cooler periods of the year and can often mean extra mowing in the middle of Winter that isn't normally required.

## The Winter Grass lifecycle

The name *Poa annua* tells you a lot *Poa* derived from the grass family *Poaceae* and *annua* simply the Latin for annual. In Australia, a lot of our weeds love Winter, as our predominately warm season grasses slow down they see their chance and weeds like Bindii and Winter Grass pounce.

Winter Grass germinates as soil temperatures drop below 12 degrees, with a slight variation in biotypes germinating at slightly higher and cooler temperatures. For areas like Sydney this generally occurs in early March but can occur early in more southern states.

It grows through Winter and by the end is quite a large weed.

As Spring arrives the older leaves start to go yellow and seeds begin to develop ensuring its survival for next year.

## Preventative treatments of Winter Grass

Prevention is the best way to treat Winter Grass. It's how the pros do it, so that's how we recommend doing it. After all it's much easier to make a single application and prevent the Winter Grass than make multiple post emergent applications, pull them out by hand or do lots more mowing.



# PUT UP A BARRICADE TODAY

Prevent Winter Grass



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# Why do our lawns go brown in Winter?

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## Why?

During the winter months, the grass enters a period of dormancy, this process is natural and helps the grass survive the cold and dry winter conditions.

Our lawns don't just go brown, they turn a huge range of colours, just like the leaves on the many deciduous trees. So, enjoy the purples, yellows and oranges that your lawn has to offer.

## How does this happen?

As high school science taught us, a plant is green because of the chlorophyll pigment in it. What you may not know is that there are other pigments in your lawn's leaves, anthocyanin being a key one. As chlorophyll production decreases in Winter the other pigments in the lawn become the more dominant pigment, it changes colour.



## How to keep it green?

There are 2 ways to keep your lawn green through the Winter period.

1. Boost the levels of nutritional elements within the lawns leaves that are critical for chlorophyll production - that's iron and magnesium. Products like [LAWN PLAY ENHANCE](#) or [LAWNGANICS BRILLIANCE](#) are perfect for this.
2. Artificially add a professional quality pigment (not paint) to the lawn that can help mimic the effects and colour of the missing pigment in the plant. [LAWN PLAY VERDANT](#) is exactly that.



# GET A SPRING START ON THE COMPETITION: THE BENEFITS OF AUTUMN FERTILISATION

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We all love to have a great lawn in Spring but there's actually a secret way to get a head start on the competition. Here we discuss what might be a new concept for most, the benefits of Autumn fertiliser. Whilst it's common knowledge that fertilising in Spring is hugely beneficial, most people aren't aware of the benefits of an Autumnal feed.

## **The benefits of fertilising in Autumn**

If you're new to fertilising in Autumn we are so happy to be able to bring this information to you.

The benefits include:

### **Increased length of growing season**

During this period, it is common for lawns to be hungry, having not been fed since Spring. As a result of this they often slip into dormancy so fertilising can increase the longevity of the growing period for your lawn.





### **Increased density into slow growth season (wear and tear)**

Our lawns are often worn out from Summer, whether it be from family cricket games or even a bad Summer with drought or insect damage. A fertiliser containing readily available nutrition and wetting agent can help with hydrophobicity (water repelling soils) and encourage it to return to full density.

### **Increased density into peak weed season**

Increasing density in Autumn is crucial, once we get to Winter grass growth is slow but weed growth is fast. So one of the key elements to preventing weed seed germination and growth is a strong, thick, dense canopy of turf across your lawn. It's one of the reasons Buffalo grasses are so popular.

### **Root and stolon development**

A lawn is simply lots of turf grass plants and like every other plant they react to the changing soil temperatures, whilst some plants drop their leaves the turfgrass plant actually does a few different things. One of those is to put out new runners as well as storing nutrients in these stems.

### **Early spring green-up**

It's weird to say that a grass which grows along the surface has a stem, but it is a plant and it simply has modified stems. Rhizomes grow as stems underneath the surface and stolons grow across the top. These stems will actually take in nutrients and store them for when the temperatures start to rise in Spring. So, fertilising in Autumn can have your lawn coming out of dormancy as soon as soil temperatures allow, putting you ahead of your neighbours come Spring.

# RENOVATE



Restore your lawn now while you still have the chance.

Professional quality products and the advice to match.

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# How To Apply Liquid Lawn Fertilisers



Firstly, here are some of the reasons we love them:

- Less water usage
- More readily available nutrition
- Less concern over soil pH
- Nutrient leaching
- Can be mixed with other liquids to create combination products

**The steps to spraying:**

- **Select the right liquid lawn fertiliser** – the right product gets the best results everytime.
- **Read and follow the label** – there's a lot of very useful information on there for safety and better results.
- **Measure your lawn** – without an accurate measurement you could be over or under applying product.
- **Calculate the amount of product and water required** – not sure? Feel free to give us a call.
- **Pre-check your sprayer** – the last thing you want is it not working or leaking after you have put chemical in the tank.
- **Add water then product** – it's best for the product to start dispersing the moment it's added.
- **Agitate the product** – half filling with water and then filling the rest of the way after product is added is a great way to disperse the product through the tank evenly.
- **Spray through the line** – the spray line to the nozzle will still be just water until you have run it through.
- **Apply the product** – nice and evenly, ideally in two different directions.
- **Watering in** – required with some products and not with others, so read the label.

# PRODUCT PROFILE: LAWN PLAY ENHANCE



**LAWN PLAY ENHANCE** is a foliar applied product that really does make your neighbours green with envy. If you're wishing your lawn was greener, then this is the product for you, taking your lawns colour to the next level.

It contains a highly concentrated blend of 3 important greening elements, nitrogen, iron and magnesium. These nutrients all have roles in the turfgrass plant and when applied in this concentrated method they can have a huge impact on the colour of your lawn.

**Nitrogen and Magnesium** – both form an integral part of the chlorophyll molecule and as we all know it's chlorophyll that gives our plants that deep green colour.

**Iron**- forms a constituent of several enzymes and pigments critical to the creation of chlorophyll.

So by boosting the right nutritional elements, in your lawn you can really take it to that next level green.

### ***When should I use it?***

LAWN PLAY ENHANCE is a greening fertiliser and can be used all year round to enhance the green colour of your lawn. Where it comes into its own though is when we are experiencing low light conditions e.g. Autumn and Winter where chlorophyll production is low. By applying at these times, you can boost the chlorophyll production and thereby the growth of the lawn.

### ***How do I use it?***

Good thing we added a guide on how to apply liquid lawn fertilisers above! We do also have a video on how to **use a liquid lawn fertiliser here**.



# ENHANCE



Looking to keep your lawn as green as possible during Autumn and Winter? Or just trying to keep it greener than the neighbours?

We have the product for you.

Professional quality products and the advice to match.

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# Pigment VS Fertiliser



When it comes to Winter the cold temperatures are no fun for us beach loving folks and not much fun for your lawn either.

## What is a high iron fertiliser?

LAWN PLAY ENHANCE contains nitrogen, iron and magnesium, plant nutrients shown to increase the chlorophyll content within the plant, therefore adding this to your program will help increase its colour.

## What is a lawn pigment?

Firstly, a lawn pigment is not a paint. Lawn pigments like LAWN PLAY VERDANT are designed to do quite a few things:

- enhance and extend aesthetic appearance of turf
- develop into a dark natural green colour
- increase light absorption due to its similarity to chlorophyll
- increase soil and surface temperatures during cool conditions

## Can I use both?

We're trying to make lawn care as easy as possible, so the good news is not only can you use both of them but they can actually be mixed into the same tank so that you can use them in one application. So, depending on your lawn type and location you may want to use both of them or just one.

## Which one should I use to keep my lawn green?

It's not as black and white as that. It will depend on what type of grass you have and how dormant your lawn goes. So, start with ENHANCE and if you aren't happy add some VERDANT to the mix.



# VERDANT



Maximise the sunlight your lawn absorbs this Winter by boosting its ability to produce chlorophyll.

Professional quality products and the advice to match.

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# What your weeds say about your lawn



The good news about weeds is we can put them to use - they can give us an indicator of the soil's health by identifying the conditions in which specific weeds thrive.

## **The weed: Bindii**

### **The soil issue: Compaction**

The odd bindii here and there isn't a concern, but when a lawn struggles because there is very little oxygen in the root zone, this thinner leaf coverage allows the seed of the bindii to germinate.

## **The weed: Clover**

### **The soil issue: Low fertility**

Clover is a legume, that means it can take nitrogen out of the air and use this to grow. In a lawn where nutrition is low, but the weeds can turn nitrogen from the air into food, then the lawn has very little chance to out-compete the weeds.

## **The weed: Nutgrass**

### **The soil issue: Wet soil**

Sedges like Nutgrass are generally found along the edges of riverbanks, so it's not surprising to find that Nutgrass is a lover of wet soils and can't survive in dry soils. This has been a real problem with this past La Nina season.

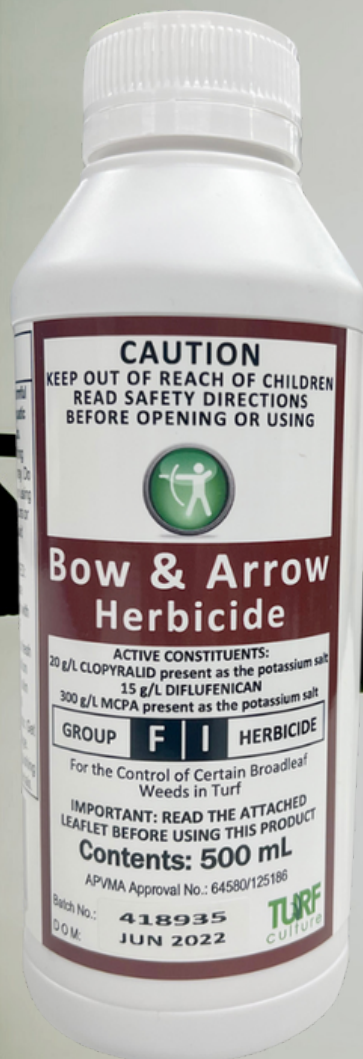
## **The weed: Winter Grass**

### **The soil issue: Shaded lawn, wet, compacted, thin**

Winter Grass germinates around March in areas of the lawn that are impacted by shade, using the thinner areas as an opportunity to grow through. This is the first area, but once it has hold in your lawn it will germinate almost anyway, including cracks in your driveway.



# BOW & ARROW



Every lawn lover needs a few standard products in their shed. A broadleaf herbicide that targets a huge number of weeds and is highly effective is a must.

Professional quality products and the advice to match.

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