Creeping Charlie

Glechoma hederacea

This perennial weed in the mint family, also called ground ivy, creeping Jenny or gill-on-the-ground, spreads by seeds, rhizomes and creeping stems and is difficult to eliminate from yards. It thrives in moist, shady spots but grows anywhere turf is thin. In spring small, bluish-purplish flowers bloom on short stems.

Control

- Improve turf health and density.
- Hand-pull small infestations; remove all plant parts so they can't re-root.
- Apply broadleaf herbicides according to label directions when weeds are actively growing. Mid- to late autumn, after first frost, is the best time; another good time is in spring when plants are in bloom. A second application 3-4 weeks later may be necessary for best results.
- Borax is not an effective control and can injure turf and other plants.

Provided by UW-Extension Master Gardeners
www.hort.wisc.edu/mastergardener/

Fertilizing Your Lawn

The best way to know how much fertilizer your lawn needs is by having a soil test. The test can save you time and money by telling you if you need to fertilize, what type of fertilizer to use, and how much your lawn needs.

- Fertlize your lawn every year.
- Use fertlizers with at least 50% of the nitrogen in a slow-release form and that are low in phosporus (the middle number in the NPK formula listed on the bag).
- **Several applications are better than one.** The ideal schedule is:
  1) Around Memorial Day
  2) Around 4th of July
  3) Around Labor Day
  4) After the final mowing (around Halloween)

If you can't make all of these, the last one is the most important.

- Water the lawn after each application.

Provided by UW-Extension Master Gardeners
www.hort.wisc.edu/mastergardener/

Crabgrass Control

Crabgrass is a warm-season, annual grass which grows best in full sun. It starts germinating when soil temperatures are about 55ºF — this is typically around the time common lilac is in bloom. It is a weed because of its wide, coarse leaves and prostrate habit that smothers nearby grass. Crabgrass sets seed in late summer and is killed by fall frosts.

Control

- Create a dense, healthy lawn by proper fertilization, mowing and irrigation.
- Apply a pre-emergent herbicide according to label directions BEFORE seeds germinate. Granular forms can be easily applied with fertilizer spreaders. Always water the lawn after application to move the herbicide to the soil surface.
- If your entire lawn is not affected, make spot treatments only where crabgrass is a problem.

Provided by UW-Extension Master Gardeners
www.hort.wisc.edu/mastergardener/

Mowing Your Lawn

Mowing is the most important factor in keeping a lawn healthy. It's important not to let fast growing grass get the best of you. There are three important things to remember when mowing:

1. **Mow high** — about 3" high. Follow the 1/3 rule: never remove more than one-third of the leaf blades at any one mowing.
2. **Mow often** — when the grass needs it, not on a schedule. This is determined by growth rate of the turfgrass, which is related to the weather. A lawn may require mowing 2-3 times a week in spring.

3. **Mow sharp** — dull blades tear the grass rather than cutting it. The torn leaves dry out, giving the lawn a brownish or whitish appearance (and may be more susceptible to diseases). Sharpen your mower's blades 2-3 times each year.

Provided by UW-Extension Master Gardeners
www.hort.wisc.edu/mastergardener/

Additional Resources on Lawns

Creeping Charlie

Article on MG website (www.hort.wisc.edu/mastergardener/) — click on Hort Info, then Archives and choose from “C” drop down box.

UW-Extension Publications on Turf Topics (all available at http://cecommerce.uwex.edu)

Growing Grass in Shade (A3700)
Identifying Grasses in Wisconsin Turf (A1827)
Lawn Aeration and Topdressing (A3710)
Lawn Establishment & Renovation (A3434)
Lawn Fertilization (A2303)
Lawn Maintenance (A3435)
Sampling Lawn and Garden Soils for Soil Testing (A2166)
Supina Bluegrass for Lawns, Golf Courses, and Athletic Fields (A3759)

Pests
Black Cutworms in Golf Turf (A3733-E)
Earthworms in Turf (A3735-E) Lawn Weed Prevention and Control (A1990)
Mole Control (G3200)
Sod Webworms in Turf (A3734-E)
Turfgrass Disorder: Greenbug (A3179)
Turfgrass Disorder: Sod Webworms (A3271)
Turfgrass Disorder: White Grubs (A3275)

UW-Extension Garden Fact Sheets (available as both Word and pdf files at http://www.uwex.edu/ces/wihort/GardenFacts2.html)

Moss in Lawns (XHT1114)