

Home & GARDEN LAWN & GARDEN

Problem: Early spring snow mold How to Improve your Lawn this Spring

Everyone wants a beautiful lawn, so we ask the local expert in the area how they do it. Ron Schiedel, President of Greenhorizons (locally Halton Sod) has a lot to say about growing beautiful lawns.

Rake .. Rake .. Rake

Ron says the best thing to do in early spring is to rake your lawn. Even a little raking is good but a good aggressive raking is a lot better. The idea is to get the thatch out of your lawn so it can breathe right down to the crown. In addition, the heavy snow and ice have caused the blades of grass to lay over, so you'll want to get them standing straight up. Don't worry too much about tearing off good blades because the overall results will cover the loss in no time.

The Snow Mold Problem this year ..

Over the last couple of weeks Greenhorizons employee, Peter Rauwerda has been noticing a large amount of snow mold on Homeowners lawns. These yellow circular patches can reek havoc to people's lawns. There are two types of snow molds one is pink snow mold and the other is grey snow mold. It's hard to say which one Peter sees the most of, but both appear and are treated the same.

Peter has noticed Snow Mold on his own lawn at home. One morning on his way to work Peter noticed a few symptoms of snow mold. The next evening when he came home he notice the very

evident rings on his front lawn. Once you notice these rings rake them out immediately. By doing this you allow air to get at the crown of the plants. Otherwise the grass plants could be smothered and have a good potential to die.

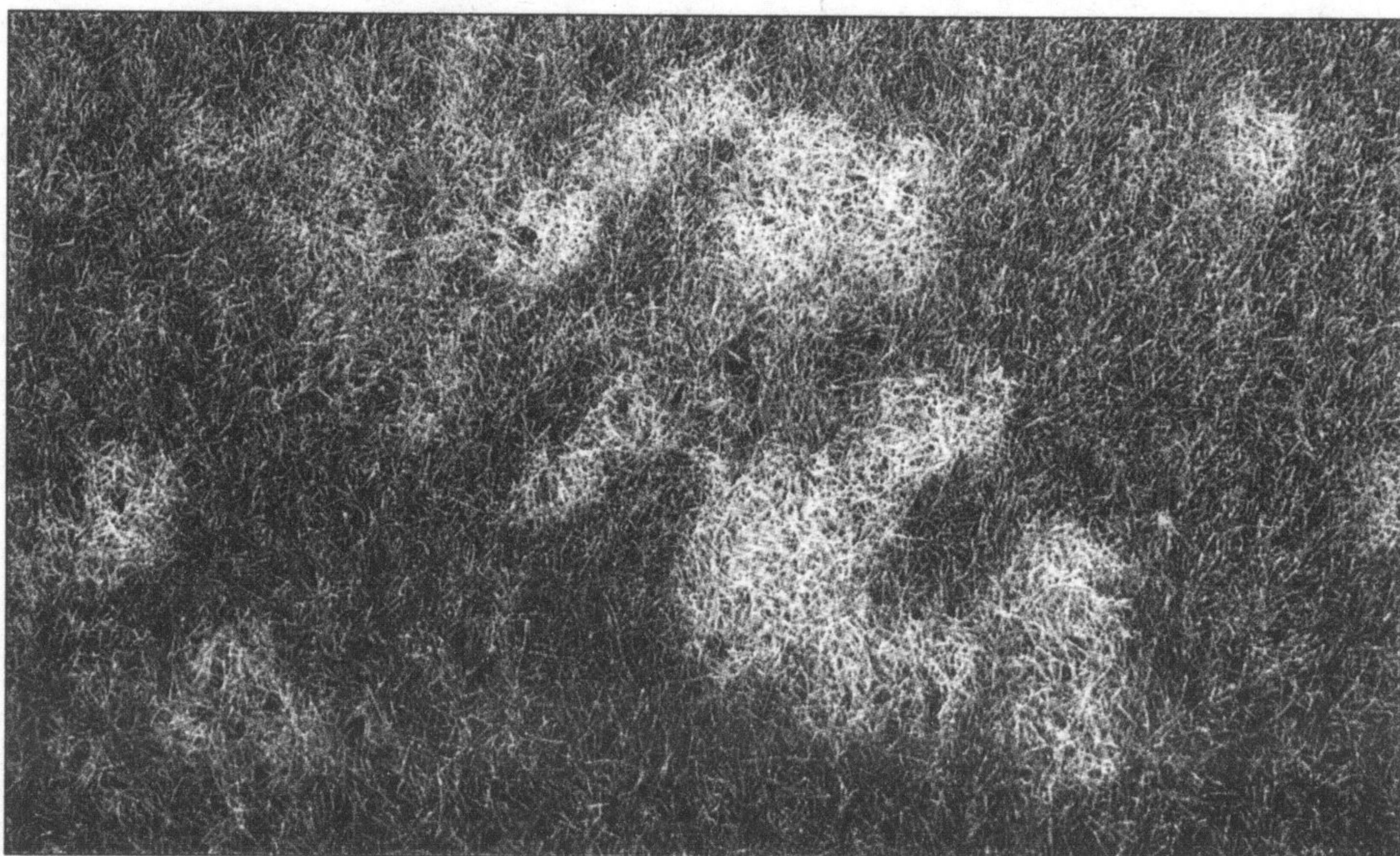
If you notice this on your lawn Peter would highly suggest a heavy raking over the entire area. If you "raked out" the snow mold; in a month or so your lawn should bounce back. If it does not, you could repair the lawn by overseeding at the end of April beginning of May. However, if it is so far gone you may want to sod the areas that were heavily infested.

This information has been provided by Ron Schiedel, President of Greenhorizons Group of Farms, who also manages Halton Sod in Hornby and Compact Sod in Cambridge.

More About Halton Sod

Greenhorizons Group of Farms own and manage: Compact Sod in Cambridge, Hamilton Sod in Mount Hope, Ontario Sod in Oakville, Halton Sod in Hornby, Niagara Sod in St.Catharines and Willow Valley Golf course (www.willowvalleygolf.com) in Mount Hope, Ontario.

For helpful information about Growing Beautiful Lawn visit our "Just Sod it" website at www.justsodit.com



Preparing your garden

(NC)—Spring is on its way and now is the perfect time to start thinking about your garden. Whether you have a large backyard or limited space, you can create a beautiful oasis. All it takes is some time and a little care to create the perfect backyard retreat for those warm summer nights.

The lawn and garden team at Canadian Tire has put together some tips to help you get started on your garden inspirations this spring.

- Plan before you start. Decide whether you want a vegetable, herb, or flower garden. Whatever you decide, select a variety of plants. It's not only visually appealing but also helps prevent disease and pest infestation. Next, decide where you want to plant your garden. Keep in mind that placing a garden near the house allows you to keep an eye on it daily, which can help prevent excessive weeds and disease. Vegetables require at least six hours of direct sunlight each day, as do many perennials and annuals. For shady sites, there are many types of plants and flowers that flourish in that environment.

- Prepare the area. Once you have chosen where you want to have your garden, you need to get the ground ready. Clear the area of debris and turn the soil. Adding organic matter to the soil adds nutrients and will increase the chances of plant survival.

- Plant your garden. Most plants come with instructions on when to plant, how deep to place them, and how far apart they should be. If you need assistance, ask at your local Canadian Tire garden centre - many stores have a horticulturalist on staff.

- Maintenance is an important part of creating a garden. Typically, the climate in your area dictates water requirements. Keep note of humidity levels, the moisture of your soil and how often it

rains. Water plants slowly and close to the bottom to allow the water to soak in and do so early in the morning to reduce evaporation.

- Mulch - To help the growth of your plants, place mulch on top of soil. Mulch helps to keep weeds out and moisture in.

- Fertilize - A liquid fertilizer should be used once a month or a dry fertilizer about halfway through the gardening season to keep your garden looking its best.

- Enjoy - Creating a beautiful garden takes work and dedication, with regular upkeep. The results can be rewarding and with the right tools, good advice and a little luck, you can create a wonderful escape in your own backyard. For a great selection of gardening products, visit your local Canadian Tire store or go online at www.canadiantire.ca.



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