

Grubs, bugs and slugs: how to combat a gardener's worst enemies

(NC)—Most people love the look and feel of a blanket of beautiful, green grass. Yet achieving sod superiority is difficult, especially with saboteurs like grubs, aphids and other pesky creatures scrounging around.

Most of us have some of these pests living on our lawns year-round, but they only become a problem when conditions ripen for an infestation. You can prevent that from happening by following a few simple steps:

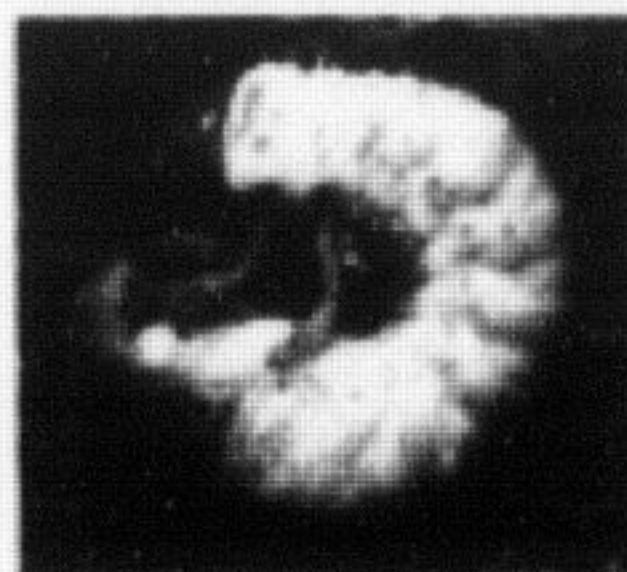
- Look at the problem as a whole and focus on prevention. Look at all available information and consider all your options before deciding how to proceed;
- Check your lawn regularly. Early inspection leads to early intervention and elimination;
- Identify the pests and read up on them. Sometimes beneficial insects are mistaken for pesky ones, and;
- Once you've identified the pest, check for damage and then take action.

This action could include the use of pesti-

cides. Though Health Canada has registered many pesticides for use in Canada, some provinces and municipalities have placed additional restrictions on pesticide use on public and private property. Check for restrictions with your local authorities before you use a registered pesticide on your lawn.

Some of the worst enemies of a healthy lawn include:

• **White grubs:** the larvae of beetles, grubs are the scourge of gardeners. White or yellowish, they have wrinkled, c-shaped bodies with brownish heads and six legs. They eat grass roots; as they eat, the grass will turn brown and die.



• **Hairy chinch bugs:** black with white wings and two tiny black spots visible on their back, these bugs boast piercing, sucking mouths that they use to



All common turfgrass species in Ontario are susceptible to chinch bug damage

feed on the sap of grass plants.

• **Slugs and snails:** 2 to 4 cm long with one or two pairs of tentacles, these molluscs can cause major damage in your garden. Able to eat nearly 40 per cent of their weight, they attack seedlings, roots, tubers and young plants, leaving large jagged holes and sticky deposits, mainly on the leaves of herbs and garden vegetables.



For help in identifying and treating the problem, Health Canada has produced some very thorough Pest Notes with photos and how-to information at www.healthcanada.gc.ca/pmra.

www.newscanada.com

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