

CONTROLLING NUTSEDGE



Nutsedge, or nutgrass as it is often called, is a fast-growing weed found in gardens, lawns pastures and crops throughout Oklahoma. Yellow nutsedge is the most common variety in our area.



Yellow nutsedge resembles a grass, but its stems are solid and triangle shaped. Sedges have edges; grasses have hollow round stems.

Yellow nutsedge leaves are yellow to green in color, are very shiny, and grow in groups of three around the stem.

Yellow nutsedge is often imported in topsoil, mulch or nursery plants that contain nutlets.

Yellow nutsedge thrives in most soil types and is particularly fond of very moist areas and well-drained sandy soil.



The names nutsedge and nutgrass come from the small nut-like tubers called “nutlets” the plants produce. These nutlets overwinter well giving yellow nutsedge a jump-start in the spring. Nutsedges also produce rhizomes enabling them to spread quickly throughout the growing season. It recovers faster than grass after mowing too, usually in about two days. Nutlets can live up to 10 years in the ground before emerging to produce new nutsedge plants.

Cultural Control

Hand pulling is somewhat effective very early in the growing season before nutlets and rhizomes have formed underground. Nutsedges thrive in moist soil, so controlling moisture may help limit, but will not eliminate established plants.

Chemical Control

Always read and follow all label instructions when using herbicides. Apply in summer when yellow nutsedge is actively growing. For best control, most of these will need to be applied twice during the summer according to the label directions. Products containing bentazon, halosulfuron, and sulfentrazone are all safe for use on all of our turfgrasses. **Imazaquin cannot be used on fescue lawns. None of these chemicals can be used for flower or vegetable gardens.** For these areas it is either hand pulling or the careful use of glyphosate, which does not migrate through soil.

You can get answers to all your gardening questions by calling the Tulsa Master Gardeners Help Line at 918-746-3701 or by emailing us at mg@tulsamastergardeners.org, or come see us at our Diagnostic Center at 4116 East 15th Street, Tulsa, OK.

Sources

“Ask a Master Gardener” June 20, 2015, Brian Jervis

OSU Tulsa Master Gardeners Bermuda Grass Maintenance Schedule

OSU Tulsa Master Gardeners Fescue Grass Maintenance Schedule

University of Missouri “Yellow Nutsedge Weed ID Guide”