

NEWS FLASH! BUMPER CROP OF WEEDS!

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Some of our most troublesome warm weather weeds, top, left to right: Dandelion officinale, spotted spurge, and chamberbitter. Below, l to r, stagger daisy, mulberry weed and yellow sedge.



News Flash: A Bumper Crop of Weeds are Growing in the Upper Gulf Coast of Texas. Moist soils, warm temperatures, and sunshine are providing the perfect growing conditions for an abundance of summer weeds. Take a moment to assess the



landscape and make a plan.

Some of the dominant summer weeds are Chamberbitter, Dandelions, Mulberry weed, Spotted Spurge, Staggler Daisy, and Nutsedge. Pictures are available on the internet to help in recognition and identification of these problem plants.

Start by removing weeds that are blooming and setting seeds. Bag and dispose of the culprits to keep from spreading additional seeds. DO NOT try to compost the debris. Compost pile temperatures must be 150-160 degrees to kill weed seeds. It is essential to stir and turn the material in the pile weekly to insure complete decomposition and destruction of unwanted seeds.

If the lawn is weedy, bag and dispose of clippings. Do not encourage weed growth by over fertilizing. Lush growth may require more frequent mowing to keep weeds from blooming. DO NOT scalp the grass. Three inches of blade growth will actually require less water and will shade the ground discouraging seed germination.

Use hand tools to stir and loosen the soil as juvenile weeds are removed from ornamental plantings. Bag and dispose of plant material. Growing conditions are still conducive for roots to reestablish if allowed to contact soil.

Placing seven to ten sheets of newspaper and three to four inches of course, organic mulch on bare soil will help prevent new weed infestations, plus this will keep soils moist and cool. An additional benefit is blocking sunlight from germinating seeds still buried in the soil.

If possible solarize large bare areas until fall planting time. In sunny locations, clean off the plant material and moisten the soil before covering with clear plastic. The sunshine



will raise the temperatures under the plastic.

In a couple of weeks, remove the cover and turn the soil before replacing the plastic. Do this for six to eight weeks during July and August. Killing soil pests and diseases is an added benefit of solarization.

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