

### Algae in Bird Baths

This is Gardening with Chuck on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. If you have a bird bath you know it can be an ongoing battle to keep algae or moss growth reduced and equipment clean. Unfortunately, there are no magic answers or silver bullets to make it work free, but there are some things you can do to hopefully have a little less work! There are many products out there to kill moss and algae growth but you have to be careful in using these in ponds or even fountains depending on if you have fish in your garden pond. But bird baths are a bit of a different beast. Because they have non moving water, they are at greatest risk of developing issues. I refill my bird bath daily. Twice a week I dump it totally, and hose it out to keep it from breeding mosquitoes. About once a week I dump the water out of my bird bath and using a brush I clean out all the green debris growing on the bird bath surface. Every two to three weeks, after the sun goes down, I add a few ounces of chlorine bleach. The bleach will kill any remaining algae cells. The beauty of chlorine bleach is that overnight, especially with some of the warm nights we have been having, the chlorine evaporates so there aren't any residues or taste that might turn birds away. Make sure you are using plain chlorine bleach without scents or additives. If you are concerned about any residues, then use a few ounces of bleach in water to scrub the bird bath, rinse it off well and then let it dry in the sun. Any residue that's left will dissipate in the heat and sun. Then refill and enjoy the birds! This has been Gardening with Chuck on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

## Bermudagrass Renovation

This is Gardening with Chuck on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. Bermudagrass can be an invasive pest of fescue or bluegrass lawns, especially in areas of full sun. If you have a lot of bermudagrass in your yard there is no quick and easy way to selectively get it out of your yard. The best approach may be to kill everything and start over. Here's my disclaimer though - if the bermudagrass is coming from a neighbors yard, you'll be battling it forever. Glyphosate or Roundup is the herbicide you will use to kill everything to start with. If it hasn't been raining regularly you will need to water the lawn well to get the grass growing again. Wait 5 to 7 days don't mow, you want a lot of leaf area to catch the herbicide, and then carefully spray the lawn with the glyphosate. Be careful around shrubs and flower beds as glyphosate is non-selective and will kill everything. Glyphosate works slow so be patient. About a week after spraying, mow it and water it again, if it hasn't rained. Then 14 days after the first treatment, hopefully there's not much green left, but spray again to get any straggler plants that were missed the first time. Somewhere in this time frame take a composite soil sample and bring it in to the Extension Office so we can run a soil test to see if you need to adjust soil pH or add starter fertilizer. Two weeks after the second treatment you can mow it really low to get a lot of that dead vegetation off the lawn. Then you are ready to proceed in early September with either tilling it up and reseeding or using a power seeder to plant your grass. This has been Gardening with Chuck on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

## Late Season Crabgrass Control

This is Gardening with Chuck on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. As I've driven around town in recent weeks it has become very easy to pick out the lawns where irrigation water has been applied. Not necessarily because they are nice and green, but because they are nice and green and many are becoming lushly obvious with warm season annual weedy grasses like foxtail and crabgrass. If you have one of these irrigated lawns look closely at it. If you see pale green, in fact almost yellowish green grass plants, especially when viewed with the sun behind the grasses, and these grasses seem to be now growing slightly faster than the darker green fescue or bluegrass, then you've been invaded. Even if you applied crabgrass preventers you may have breakthroughs for many reasons. The preventer may have been applied too late, or didn't get activated with irrigation soon enough. You may have spots where zero turn mowers were a little too aggressive and dug up some turf thereby disturbing the soil and breaking the barrier. Fortunately there are options, or at this stage of the game AN option. Herbicides with quinclorac, while good for small crabgrass may well be challenged by crabgrass this big. You need something with fenoxaprop-p-ethyl and this is generally found in a Bayer Advanced, or now becoming Bioadvanced Crabgrass Killer for Lawns. It comes with it's own hose end sprayer. Attach it to your garden hose and spray. While it's very effective don't expect to see the plants die overnight. But be patient, it does work very well! This has been Gardening with Chuck on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

## Cross Pollination - what does and doesn't happen

This is Gardening with Chuck on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. I have long felt that everyone in society should have to take a genetics class. It would make my life much easier. Some plants cross pollinate some don't. Some have to cross pollinate to produce, others rarely cross pollinate because of the way their flowers are. Some plants are designed to be pollinated by wind, others by bees. But for pollination to occur, there has to be a match in the genetic material. Corn can't pollinate wheat. Tomato and potato are both in the genus Solanum, but tomatoes have 24 chromosomes and potatoes have 48. One can not pollinate another. I receive a lot of calls about vine crops cross pollinating each other. Muskmelon and cantaloupe have 12 chromosomes, cucumbers have 14 and watermelon have 22. None of these can cross pollinate the others. It just can't happen so quit telling me it has. Now, pumpkin and squash are all in the same big happy family. They all have 40 chromosomes and do have the potential to cross pollinate. If adequate isolation between seed production fields is not maintained you can occasionally get a seed that produces fruit that just isn't quite like what's expected. But here's the kicker. If cross pollination does occur, you don't know it until the seed is grown out the following year. The fruit this year is just the carrier of the seeds and will not be affected by the pollen source for the seeds inside. However, there is one case where pollen source can make a difference, and that's in sweet corn. But that's for another day! This has been Gardening with Chuck on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

Don't use Tordon in yards!

This is Gardening with Chuck on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. At least a couple times per summer I see the symptoms. Somebody cut down some trees of some size and someone told them that they needed to get a stump killer called Tordon to do a good job of killing the stump. Here's a case of where being in an agricultural community makes it entirely too easy to get ahold of some of these herbicides. Tordon RTU, standing for ready to use, is a formulation of picloram. Picloram is a broadleaf and woody plant herbicide that works very well in some very specific situations. While Tordon does work well at killing stumps of most trees most people never read the fine print, if in fact they read anything on the label. If you take the time to actually read the label you will find that it says: "Tordon RTU should not be applied on residential or commercial lawns or near ornamental trees and shrubs. Untreated trees can occasionally be affected by root uptake of herbicide through movement into the topsoil or by excretion of the product from the roots of nearby treated trees." What I see all too often is that Tordon was used exactly contrary to these directions. Rain or irrigation washes some of the herbicide into the soil because Tordon moves readily in soil water. The herbicide then gets taken up by the roots of desirable trees or shrubs and sometime later, foliage starts to distort and the resulting damage usually kills the plant!

Don't use Tordon around lawns. If you need to kill stumps use triclopyr or glyphosate to avoid damage! This has been Gardening with Chuck on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.