

HORTICULTURE

— *Illustrated* —

NEW ENGLAND EDITION

Twice a Month

MARCH 15, 1946



BOWLING GREEN-QUALITY LAWN

THE building of a bowling green represents the ultimate in fine lawn construction. I can testify as to the amount of hard work and patience required to produce satisfactory results. Also, the turf of a bowling green is usually developed with bent grasses which are not always suitable for ordinary lawn use. In spite of these limitations, I believe that some of the details of technique which I have worked out in the course of developing and maintaining a green for Mrs. Ralph Hornblower at Plymouth, Mass., can be put to good use by lawn makers everywhere.

The first move in the making of a green is to make sure of the presence of 12 to 14 inches of good, rich top soil. This loam should be raked as smooth as possible. In the case of a bowling green, one-inch pitch or slope to every 10 feet across the green should be allowed for surface drainage.

After that, the area should be rolled in both directions. Then sprinklers should be turned on. Puddles of water will collect in the low places. After the surface soil has dried, these depressions can be filled by more raking and rolling. This routine of watering, raking and rolling can be repeated until an even surface is achieved.

It is a good idea to let the area stand unseeded for about two months. During that period, bi-weekly use of a scuffle hoe will destroy weeds as they come up. Four such weed killings is usually sufficient.

Rhode Island bent is the preferred grass for fine greens. A liberal application of complete chemical fertilizer or milorganite should be made a few days before sowing. The fertilizer should be raked into the soil surface. After that, the grass seed should be divided into two lots and one sown at right angles to the other to ensure a more even distribution. Ample but careful watering should be given during the period of germination.

The first mowing should take place when the new grass is three inches tall. An inch and a half is a short enough cut for this first mowing. The grass should be dry when mowed the first few times, otherwise the wheels of the lawn mower will skid and create bare spots. Care must be used on corners and when the lawn mower is turned around.

After the first two or three cuttings, the mower blades should be lowered to cut about one-half inch in height. The blades should cut off the grass cleanly at a height of not more than one-half inch.

Mrs. Hornblower's green is mowed two or three times a week and the machine is run from a different direction at each mowing. This keeps the grass from growing in one direction and forming a nap. Cutting from different directions forces it to grow straight up. When mowing, the best results can be obtained by taking a bamboo pole and going over the green, sweeping off the dew and breaking up the casts made by worms.

Before the grass starts to grow in the Spring, I broadcast about 25 pounds of complete fertilizer per 1000 square feet. Great care must be taken, for if any of it drops in even a very small pile, a dead spot will result.

For a quick "pick-up" and to improve the color of the grass, I use ammonium sulfate in two 16-quart watering pots, using a large-holed rose on the spouts. The amount is four table-spoonfuls of the chemical to 16 quarts of water. This solution is sprayed on heavy enough to see water on the surface of the soil. Twice a season should be often enough for this treatment—I do it in April and September.

During the Summer, I top dress the green, usually twice, depending upon conditions. The top dressing is composed of 50 per cent good, finely screened loam (I use a three-eighth-inch screen), 40 per cent screened native peat, and 10 per cent clean, sharp sand making sure this material is thoroughly mixed. As I fill my wheelbarrow, I add two small handfuls of complete fertilizer to each shovelful. This compost is spread evenly over the green and worked in with the back of a wooden rake. After the green has been covered, I turn on the sprinklers to produce a smooth, fast surface.

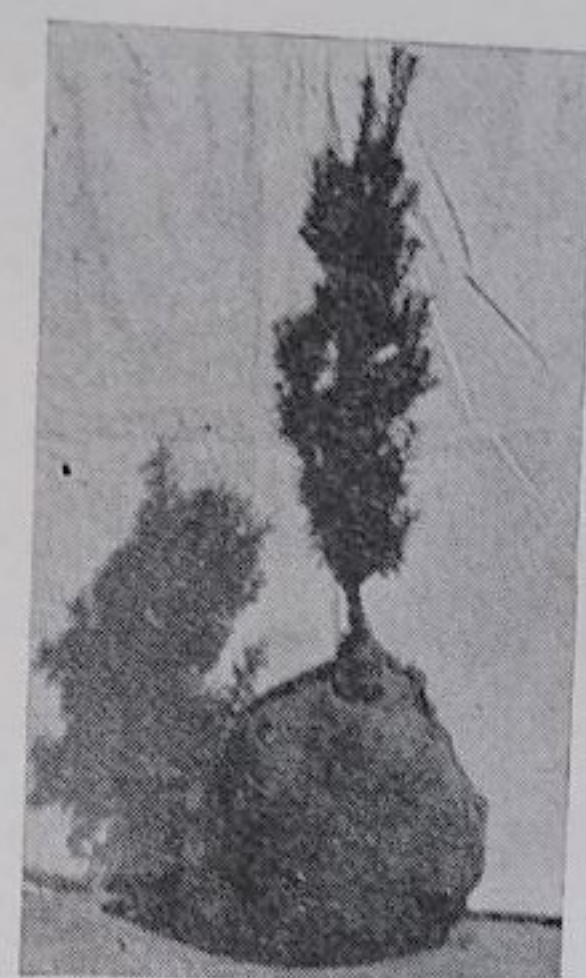
Crab grass and other weeds have to be removed by hand.

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12" ruler shown in picture



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Large Bulbs, 75 cents each; \$7.50 a dozen

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*REG. U. S. PAT. OFF.

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Care should be taken in weeding not to dig up earth and sod because even the slightest injury is noticeable in such short-cut turf.

The green which I have built is surrounded by stone walls, all of which are open-jointed. This, I feel, could have been greatly improved upon if the joints and crevices on the back faces of the walls had been filled with cement up to the point that was to be the surface of the green. This would have stopped field mice from making Winter homes in the dry wall. As it is, they honeycomb the green with holes near the walls, causing the surface of the turf to be lumpy for two or three feet from the walls.

I am not bothered by moles to any extent. In fact, I have seen only one in the past 26 years. I caught it a few minutes after I found it was on the place. I took a spade and cut out an eight-inch square of earth, cutting through the mole's tunnel and three inches deeper. I then put a small rat trap in the bottom of the pit and covered the top with a board to keep out the light. This method was successful.

—Jesse Brewer.

Plymouth, Mass.

Plant Sanctuary in Connecticut

CONNECTICUT has taken a forward step in preserving for all time an existing plant sanctuary at North Greenwich, a 150-acre wild garden area set aside by Benjamin Thomas Fairchild more than 40 years ago. In 1941 a corporation composed of a number of outstanding men and women horticulturists took over this garden, calling it the Fairchild Connecticut Garden.

There are more than 400 species of wild flowers growing there, including trilliums, several kinds of ladyslippers, fringed gentians, cardinal flowers, hepaticas, bloodroot, and dogtooth violets, to mention only a few. There is also a regulated forest of red and white oak, cedars, white birches, hemlock, tulip, ash, beech, elm and shagbark hickory.

The corporation plans to work out a program of study in natural history in the garden on birds and flowers for all ages.

School of Gardens in Boston

THE Garden Club Federation of Massachusetts will hold a School of Gardening at Horticultural Hall in Boston on April 17, and a large attendance is expected. There will be five basic talks, three in the afternoon and two in the morning. The subjects at the morning session will be "Your Garden Soil" and "What's New and Best in Insecticides."

In the afternoon, the subjects discussed will be "Fruits and Vegetables for Your Peace-time Gardening," "Better Ornamental Trees and Shrubs" and "Design in Your Garden." Specialists will talk on each of these subjects.

The course will be open to everyone interested in gardening, the admission fee being \$2.20, tax included.