

Dandelion, Common

[*Taraxacum officinale* Weber in Wiggers]

DESCRIPTION

Dandelion is a perennial weed with a thick, fleshy taproot and no stem. Leaves grow in a rosette from the crown. They are long, narrow, irregularly lobed, and lance shaped. The lobed tips are often opposite each other and pointing toward the crown. Leaves are often purple at the base and leaves and flower stalks emit a milky white sap when broken.



The deep golden yellow flowers are borne in heads on long hollow stalks. Blossoms soon mature into spherical clusters of whitish fruits, like white puffballs, composed of parachute-like seeds. Seeds are carried by the wind. Cat's ear dandelion is similar to common dandelion. Common dandelion plants can be distinguished because young leaves do not have hairs, whereas cat's ear dandelion leaves have dense hairs.

Characteristic	Description
Growth Season	perennial weed
Growth Habit	rosette
Leaflet Number	one
Leaf Margin	irregular border; lobes point back toward base of plant
Leaf Hairs	older leaves may have hairs
Leaf/Leaflet Shape	young leaves are oval to spatulate; older leaves are lance-shaped or oblong
Leaf Width	1/2 - 1 inch
Leaf Venation	pinnate
Leaf Arrangement	whorled or basal rosette
Root Type	taproot
Flower Color	yellow



common dandelion rosette



common dandelion seedheads

Note: Still not sure this is the right weed? [The Turf & Weed Identification Decision Aid](#) may help. Check the TurfFiles [glossary](#) for definitions of unfamiliar terms.

CULTURAL CONTROL

Perennial broadleaf turf weeds are capable of living more than two years. They thrive in weak, thin turf; golf fairways and roughs; home lawns; playfields; and industrial grounds. Proper turf maintenance is the key to control of this weed. First, select adapted turfgrass cultivars for your area and then properly fertilize, mow, and water to encourage dense growth.

CHEMICAL CONTROL

Dandelion may be effectively controlled in the fall or spring with two, three and four way broadleaf herbicides, as well as with some sulfonylurea herbicides.

Preemergence herbicides:

Herbicide	Tolerant Turfs ⁽¹⁾	Average Efficacy Rating ⁽²⁾	Range of Trial Efficacy Values, %	Number of Trials	Products ⁽³⁾
atrazine*	be, c, sa, z	F		0	AAtrex 4L

Postemergence herbicides:

Herbicide	Tolerant Turfs ⁽¹⁾	Average Efficacy Rating ⁽²⁾	Range of Trial Efficacy Values, %	Number of Trials	Products ⁽³⁾
trifloxysulfuron-sodium	be, z	E	98 - 100	8	Monument
metsulfuron	be, sa, z	E	100	4	Escort**, Manor
2,4-D	be, bk, f, r, z	E		0	2,4-D amine, Solution Water Soluble
clopyralid & triclopyr**	be, bk, c, f, r, z	E		0	Confront
dicamba	ba, be, bk, f, r, z	E		0	Banvel, Clarity, Vanquish
glyphosate		E		0	Glyphosate Original, Roundup, Touchdown Pro**
2,4-D & triclopyr*	bk, f, r	G		0	Chaser
fluroxypyr	ba, bk, c, f, r, sa, z	F-G		0	Spotlight
2,4-D & carfentrazone & dicamba & mecoprop	ba, bc, be, bk, f, r, z	F	59 - 96	2	Speed Zone, Speed Zone Southern
2,4-D & mecoprop	ba, be, bk, f, r	F	73 - 76	2	Scotts Turf Builder With Plus 2
atrazine*	be, c, sa, z	F		0	AAtrex 4L
clopyralid**	ba, bc, be, bk, c, f, r, sa, z	F		0	Lontrel

* For use only by or under the supervision of a certified applicator, or by commercial nursery, turf, and landscape personnel.

** Not for application to residential lawns.

Footnotes:

(1) **Turfgrass Codes:**

ba	bahiagrass
bc	bentgrass, creeping
be	bermudagrass
bk	bluegrass, Kentucky
c	centipedegrass
f	fescue, tall
r	ryegrass, perennial
sa	St. Augustinegrass
z	zoysiagrass
blank	No turfgrass in the database is completely tolerant. Check label to see if chemical can be used at a reduced rate or during the dormant season on your turfgrass.

(2) **Efficacy Ratings:**

E	excellent control (90 to 100%)
G	good control (80 to 90%)
F	fair control (70 to 80%)

Efficacy ratings are based on herbicide trials performed by weed scientists at North Carolina State University between 1997 and 2007. The number of trials included in the efficacy ratings is displayed in the next-to-last column. The higher this number, the more confidence can be placed in the efficacy values. Trials may have involved sequential applications of one or more chemical. Details of individual trials (herbicide rates, dates of application, environmental conditions at time of application, etc) can be viewed on the TurfFiles web site, through the [Turf Weed Management Decision Aid](#).

Efficacy ratings for chemicals lacking trial data are from "[Pest Management Strategic Plan for Turfgrass in the Southern United States](#)," a summary of a workshop for turf experts from multiple universities held in Griffin, GA in October, 2004. The workshop was sponsored by the Southern Region Integrated Pest Management Center.

- (3) Recommendations of specific chemicals are based upon information on the manufacturer's label and performance in a limited number of trials. Because environmental conditions and methods of application may vary widely, performance of the chemical will not always conform to the safety and pest control standards indicated by experimental data. The order in which brand names are given is not an indication of a recommendation or criticism.

Recommendations for the use of agricultural chemicals are included in this publication as a convenience to the reader. The use of brand names and any mention or listing of commercial products or services does not imply endorsement by North Carolina State University or discrimination against similar products or services not mentioned. Other brand names may be labeled for use on turfgrasses. Individuals who use agricultural chemicals are responsible for ensuring that the intended use complies with current regulations and conforms to the product label. Be sure to obtain current information about usage regulations and examine a current product label before applying any chemical. For assistance, contact your county's Cooperative Extension agent.

Links contained in this document:

Glossary: <http://www.turfiles.ncsu.edu/Glossary.aspx>

Pest Management Strategic Plan: <http://www.ipmcenters.org/pmsp/pdf/SouthernTurfgrass.pdf>

Turf & Weed Identification Decision Aid: <http://www.turffiles.ncsu.edu/turfid/>

Turf Weed Management Decision Aid: <http://www.turffiles.ncsu.edu/turfweedmgmt/>

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