

LOUISIANA HOME LAWN SERIES

A guide to maintaining a healthy Louisiana lawn



Common chickweed

Description

Common chickweed (*Stellaria media* [L.] Vill.) is a cool-season annual weed common throughout Louisiana. The weed typically germinates in early fall and produces flowers in the spring and spreads through seed. Due to its prostrate, mat-forming growth habit and profuse seed production, common chickweed is a difficult weed to control in turfgrass.



Common chickweed

Identification

Common chickweed has oval-shaped leaves with smooth edges. Common chickweed leaves are light green and are smooth or possibly hairy toward the base. Upper leaves are without petioles, while lower leaves have long petioles. Leaves are oppositely arranged along freely branching stems, which can sometimes be purple in color. Small white flowers grow at the end of stems and have five deeply lobed petals. Common chickweed has a branching, prostrate growth habit. For more information on common chickweed identification and characterization visit the USDA Plants Database at <https://plants.usda.gov>.



Leaf



White flower



Fruit capsule



Branching, purple stems

Cultural Control Practices

The best way to prevent or reduce weed encroachment is to maintain a healthy lawn through proper fertilization and soil pH management and regular mowing. Properly maintaining a lawn through these cultural practices promotes dense and vigorous turfgrass, allowing it to better compete with weeds. Below are the recommended mowing heights and nitrogen fertility rates recommended for each turfgrass species. In addition to these lawn care practices, manual removal of weeds may also be necessary.

Turfgrass	Mowing Height	Nitrogen Rate (per 1,000 ft ² per year)
Bermudagrass	1 - 2 inches	Up to 3 pounds
Centipedegrass	1 - 2.5 inches	Up to 2 pounds
St. Augustinegrass	2.5 - 3 inches	Up to 3 pounds
Zoysia	1 - 2.5 inches	Up to 2 pounds

Chemical Control Practices

In addition to cultural practices, herbicide applications may be required to achieve effective weed control. Common chickweed is readily controlled by several pre-emergence and post-emergence herbicides.

When applying any type of herbicide, you must follow the manufacturer's labeled directions. For more information regarding pesticides for turfgrass, please reference the Louisiana Suggested Chemical Weed Control Guide at the LSU AgCenter website, www.lsuagcenter.com.

	St. Augustinegrass	Centipedegrass	Zoysia	Bermudagrass
Postemergence Herbicide Active Ingredients				
atrazine	✓	✓	✓	dormant
simazine	✓	✓	✓	✓
isoxaben	✓	✓	✓	✓
oryzalin	✓	✓	✓	✓
dithiopyr	✓	✓	✓	✓
prodiamine	✓	✓	✓	✓
pendimethalin	✓	✓	✓	✓
Preemergence Herbicide Active Ingredients				
atrazine	✓	✓	✓	dormant
simazine	✓	✓	✓	✓
2,4-D + dicamba + mecoprop	✓	✓	✓	✓
2,4-D + dicamba + mecoprop + carfentrazone	✓	✓	✓	✓
thiencarbazone + iodosulfuron + dicamba	✓	✓	✓	✓
penoxulam + sulfentrazone + dicamba + 2,4-D	✓	✓	✓	✓
metsulfuron	✓	✓	✓	✓
metsulfuron + dicamba	✓	✓	✓	✓
metsulfuron + sulfentrazone	✓	✓	✓	✓

For information regarding weed identification and control options please contact your local LSU AgCenter Extension Parish Office. To find your local LSU AgCenter Extension Parish Office visit www.lsuagcenter.com.

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