

# Lawn Burweed (*Soliva sessilis*) Control in Turfgrass



Lawn burweed (*Soliva sessilis*), also called sticker weed, spurweed, Onehunga-weed, jo-jo weed, bindi weed, or burweed, is a troublesome winter annual weed throughout Mississippi and many temperate and subtropical environments throughout the world. The plant originates in South America and is best known for the sharp, spiny seed burs that form in spring, which can make walking barefoot across a lawn painful.

Lawn burweed germinates in the fall, usually between October and December, when soil temperatures cool. It remains small and inconspicuous through the winter, hugging the soil surface where it escapes notice. The leaves are finely divided, resembling tiny parsley or carrot leaves. In early spring, the plant produces small, white flowers that

**Close-up of a lawn burweed “bur” (spiny achene). An achene is a small, dry, one-seeded fruit that doesn’t split open after maturity. These burs develop in clusters in the leaf axils and contain the plant’s seed. As they mature, they harden into sharp spines that can cause pain when stepped on. The bur helps the plant spread its seed by clinging to fur, clothing, or skin when the plant dries out. Photo by John Gwaltney, [southeasternflora.com](http://southeasternflora.com).**

form clusters of fruit in the leaf axils. Each spiny achene (bur) contains a seed and hardens with maturity, remaining present in the turf well after the plant has senesced. Once these burs form, control options are futile, as the dried, spiny burs remain a hazard even on dead plants.



**Lawn burweed before flowering in a dormant bermudagrass lawn. It grows readily in thin or open turf, where reduced competition allows it to spread.**

A dense, healthy turf canopy remains the most reliable cultural defense against lawn burweed. Weed pressure from lawn burweed is highest in lawns with thin, stressed, or poorly maintained turfgrass, often in highly compacted soils. Improving turf density is the first step in prevention. Choosing the right grass species for the environment, along with proper fertility (nutrients and pH) for the turf, is essential, as is mowing at the correct height. Deep, infrequent irrigation during drought can lessen turf stress, while aeration can help relieve soil compaction. Washing lawn equipment after use can also help prevent the spread of seeds to new locations.

Chemical control is often needed when infestations are heavy. The most effective strategy is to prevent lawn burweed emergence. Preemergence herbicides applied in October or November (in Mississippi), before soil temperatures drop below 70°F, can prevent germination. Products containing atrazine, simazine, prodiamine, dithiopyr, indaziflam, pendimethalin, or isoxaben are effective preemergence options, especially when used in well-



**Lawn burweed is a low-growing winter annual in the Asteraceae family. It is identified by its finely divided, parsley-like leaves and small rosette habit. The spiny burs develop in leaf axils during spring.**

managed turf and activated by rainfall or irrigation immediately following application.

If preemergence applications are missed, postemergence herbicides can still provide control while burweed plants are small and immature, typically from December through February. Once the weed begins to form spiny burs in spring, herbicide treatments become less effective, and the burs, which can cause pain to humans or pets, persist in the landscape. Numerous products are available for postemergence control, including mixtures containing 2,4-D, dicamba, MCPP (mecoprop), simazine, metsulfuron, fluroxypyr, and others. Multiple applications, spaced roughly four weeks apart, may be necessary for complete control.

In short, the best way to avoid the pain of lawn burweed stickers is to manage turf properly and apply herbicides at the right time of year. Preventing germination in the fall or controlling small plants during the winter ensures that burs never form, leaving your lawn safer and more enjoyable in spring and summer.

**Turfgrass sensitivity and lawn burweed control efficacy of selected herbicides. Always read and follow label directions.**

<b>Herbicide or Example Consumer Product</b>	<b>Activity (Pre- or Postemergence)</b>	<b>Active Ingredient(s)</b>	<b>Bermudagrass</b>	<b>Carpetgrass</b>	<b>Centipedegrass</b>	<b>St. Augustinegrass</b>	<b>Zoysiagrass</b>	<b>Anticipated Control</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Dimension Ultra 40WP Herbicide	pre	dithiopyr	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	excellent	Widely available in granular and liquid homeowner formulations. Provides preemergence and early postemergence control. May interfere with establishment of sod, sprigs, or plugs. Consult label for overseeding intervals.
Hi-Yield Weed and Grass Stopper with Dimension Herbicide									
Ferti-Lome Winterizer and Weed Preventer II 10-0-14									
Ferti-Lome Crabgrass Preventer Plus									
Lawn Food with Dimension 20-0-3									
Bonide DuraTurf Crabgrass and Weed Preventer for Lawns and Ornamental Beds									
Crew Specialty Herbicide	pre	dithiopyr, isoxaben (granular)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	excellent	Combines grass and broadleaf preemergence activity. May interfere with establishment of sod, sprigs, or plugs. Follow label restrictions for overseeding or renovation.



Herbicide or Example Consumer Product	Activity (Pre- or Postemergence)	Active Ingredient(s)	Bermudagrass	Carpetgrass	Centipedeagrass	St. Augustinegrass	Zoysiagrass	Anticipated Control	Notes
Atrax 4L Image for St. Augustinegrass and Centipedeagrass Hi-Yield Atrazine Scotts Bonus S	pre and post	atrazine	Y	Y/N	Y	Y	Y	good	Provides preemergence and early postemergence control. Effective in winter or early spring on small burweed. Use reduced rates on carpetgrass. Avoid in warm weather or when bermudagrass is actively growing. May interfere with establishment of sod, sprigs, or plugs.
BioAdvanced Southern Lawn Weed & Feed	pre and post	dicamba + penoxsulam + indaziflam (granular)	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	good	Apply only to actively growing turf. Avoid use during spring transition on centipedeagrass and St. Augustinegrass. May inhibit turf establishment from sod or sprigs.
Simazine 4L	pre and post	simazine	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	good	Provides preemergence and early postemergence control. Effective in winter or early spring on small burweed. Use reduced rates on carpetgrass. Avoid in warm weather or when bermudagrass is actively growing. May interfere with establishment of sod, sprigs, or plugs.

Herbicide or Example Consumer Product	Activity (Pre- or Postemergence)	Active Ingredient(s)	Bermudagrass	Carpetgrass	Centipede/centipede	St. Augustinegrass	Zoysiagrass	Anticipated Control	Notes
2,4-D	post	2,4-D	Y	N	N	N	Y	fair	Limited burweed control when used alone. Avoid use on centipede/centipede and St. Augustinegrass, especially during spring transition. Follow species-specific label restrictions.
<i>3-way-type products:</i> Trimec 992	post	2,4-D + MCPP or mecoprop + dicamba ±	Y	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N	Y	fair-good	Most effective in winter on small burweed. Avoid use on carpetgrass, centipede/centipede, and St. Augustinegrass, especially during green-up or dormancy transition. Avoid drift or root uptake near ornamentals.
SpeedZone		carfentrazone, sulfentrazone, or quinclorac							
SpeedZone Southern									
Q-Four									
Ferti-lome Weed Free Zone									
Spectracide Weed Stop for Lawns									
Dicamba	post	dicamba	Y	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N	fair-good	Rarely used alone; commonly included in mixtures. Avoid drift or root uptake near ornamentals.
<i>Fluroxypyr mixtures:</i> Escalade 2 Change-Up	post	fluroxypyr + 2,4-D + dicamba	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N	Y	excellent	May injure bermudagrass in warm weather or during transition. Use reduced rates on carpetgrass, centipede/centipede, and St. Augustinegrass where labeled.
MSM-Turf Manor Martin's Top-shot	post	metsulfuron + other actives	Y	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N	Y	excellent	Avoid overapplication to centipede/centipede, St. Augustinegrass, and carpetgrass. Avoid near trees, especially oaks.

Herbicide or Example Consumer Product	Activity (Pre- or Postemergence)	Active Ingredient(s)	Bermudagrass	Carpetgrass	Centipedegrass	St. Augustinegrass	Zoysiagrass	Anticipated Control	Notes
Roundup for Lawns Ready-to-Use (Southern)	post	penoxsulam, sulfentrazone, 2,4-D, dicamba	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	good	Non-glyphosate mixture labeled for southern turf. Best on small burweed during winter months. Avoid spring transition applications.
Image Weed Killer (for Southern Lawns)									
Celsius	post	thiencarbazone + iodosulfuron + dicamba	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	excellent	Avoid overapplication on centipedegrass and St. Augustinegrass. Do not apply during cold stress or drought. May growth-regulate St. Augustinegrass during spring green-up.

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