

Dollar Spot

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Pathogen

Sclerotinia homoeocarpa

Turfgrasses Affected

All warm-season turfgrasses.

Occurrence

This disease is most likely to be observed from fall through spring. It will only be observed on turfgrass areas with sub-optimal nitrogen levels for that particular turfgrass species. Other factors associated with the disease are a dry root system combined with a humid leaf canopy. The humid leaf canopy may be due to either high air humidity, light rainfall or too little irrigation applied too frequently at the wrong time. See information on water and disease development.

Symptoms/Signs

Small (1-3 inches diameter), brown to straw-colored patches of dead grass will develop (Figure 1). Irregular, light tan lesions with distinct brown borders will be present on the leaves at the outside edge of the patch (Figure 2). The small individual patches do not expand in size, but as the number of patches increase, they may merge together to form larger patches. White, cottony mycelia may be observed in early morning hours when dew is present.

Cultural Controls

Prevent the disease by avoiding extreme nitrogen deficiency. Use slow-release nitrogen fertilizers, and balance the nitrogen with potassium, preferably a slow-release potassium form. During dry weather, apply adequate water so the root-zone is fully saturated each time you irrigate. Irrigate during the early morning hours (2 to 8 AM) when dew is already present.

If the disease is already present, apply a quick-release source of nitrogen (½ pound N per 1000 square feet). Examples would be ammonium sulfate, ammonium nitrate or quick-release urea (uncoated urea). Follow-up with an application of slow-release nitrogen, balanced with potassium. This is just as effective as fungicides on warm-season turfgrasses. If the soil is dry, irrigate to fully saturate the root zone.

Chemical Controls

chlorothalonil, iprodione, mancozeb, myclobutanil, PCNB, propiconazole, thiophanate methyl, thiram, triadimefon, vinclozolin.

Mancozeb can be applied to a residential lawn only by a professional pesticide applicator. Chlorothalonil, thiram, and vinclozolin cannot be applied to a residential lawn, but they can be applied to turfgrass in a business or industrial landscape.

Refer to “Turfgrass Disease Management” PPP-64 for explanations of chemical and cultural controls.



Figure 1. Dollar Spot symptoms on St. Augustinegrass. Note that the patch is very small (~3 inches) compared to Brown Patch symptoms figure 2 and 3 PP-20.



Figure 2. Leaf lesions due to Dollar Spot disease on St. Augustinegrass.



Figure 3. Dollar Spot disease control with either a fungicide(left) or by adding a quick-release nitrogen fertilizer(right).