Lawn and Turfgrass Weeds: Common Chickweed

Common chickweed is a weed of home lawns, parks, golf courses, and athletic fields.

Common chickweed [\textit{Stellaria media} (L.) Vill.] is found in both high and low maintenance turf, in sunny and shaded areas, and in many different soil types. This species tends to grow in a prostrate fashion, forming patches and is most noticeable when flowering during spring and summer.

**Life cycle**

Common chickweed is a member of the Caryophyllaceae family and is generally classified as a winter annual. Plants produce shallow, fibrous root systems and long, branching stems that grow prostrate along the soil surface and root at nodes. This species produces flowers, fruits, and seeds from spring to early fall. Seeds can germinate during spring, summer, and fall. Common chickweed produces one or two generations per year and can sometimes act as a short-lived perennial.

**Identification**

Common chickweed stems grow close to the ground then turn slightly upright, giving rise to leaves and flowers. Leaves are arranged opposite one another on stems and leaves on lower portions of the plant have short pubescent petioles, whereas those at the apex have no petioles. Individual leaves are ovate and pointed at the tip, approximately $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 inch in length, and with entire (non-serrated or smooth) margins.

Small flowers (¼ inch or less in diameter) occur at tips of stems and each flower has five white petals. Individual petals are deeply divided; thus, flowers appear to have ten petals. Each flower is subtended by five light-green sepals. Flowers develop into capsules that contain multiple seeds. Viable seeds give rise to new plants.
## Management and control

Infestations of common chickweed can be reduced by improving turf density through fertilization, regular mowing, and use of turfgrasses well-adapted to site conditions. This weed can be controlled with various postemergence herbicides, particularly those containing dicamba, MCPP, and/or fluroxypyr.

### Active ingredients | Product name(s)*
--- | ---
2,4-D and 2,4-DP | Patron 170 (ester formulation)
2,4-D, 2,4-DP, and dicamba | Super Trimec (ester formulation)
2,4-D, clopyralid, and dicamba | Millennium Ultra 2**
2,4-D, fluroxypyr, and dicamba | Escalade 2 Herbicide
2,4-D, fluroxypyr, triclopyr, and flumioxazin | Sure Power (ester formulation)
2,4-D, MCPP, dicamba | Trimec Classic, Threesome, Lesco Three-Way, 3-D Herbicide, Primera Triplet SF
2,4-D, MCPP, dicamba, and carfentrazone-ethyl | Speedzone
2,4-D, MCPP, dicamba, and sulfentrazone | Surge
2,4-D, quinclorac, and dicamba | Quincept, 2DQ Herbicide, Triad QC Select, Triad SFZ Select
2,4-D, quinclorac, dicamba, and sulfentrazone | Q4 Plus
2,4-D and triclopyr | Chaser 2 Amine, Turflon II Amine
2,4-D and triclopyr | Chaser Turf Herbicide (ester formulation)
2,4-D, fluroxypyr, and triclopyr | Momentum FX2
2,4-D, fluroxypyr, triclopyr, and sulfentrazone | Momentum 4-Score
2,4-D, triclopyr, dicamba, and pyraflufen-ethyl | 4-Speed XT (ester formulation)
2,4-D, triclopyr, dicamba, and sulfentrazone | Foundation
carfentrazone-ethyl and quinclorac | SquareOne
florasulam | Defendor
fluroxypyr | Vista XRT
fluroxypyr, dicamba, and fenoxaprop-p-ethyl | Last Call Selective Herbicide
MCPA, fluroxypyr, and dicamba | Change Up
MCPA, fluroxypyr, and triclopyr | Battleship III
MCPA, MCPP, and dicamba | Trimec Encore, Tri-Power Selective Herbicide
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Herbicide Products</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MCPA, MCPP, dicamba, and</td>
<td>Powerzone (ester formulation)</td>
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<tr>
<td>carfentrazone-ethyl</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCPA, triclopyr, and</td>
<td>Lesco Three-Way Ester II,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dicamba</td>
<td>Cool Power (ester formulation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCPA, triclopyr, and</td>
<td>Eliminate, Horsepower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dicamba</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCPP</td>
<td>Mecomec 4 Turf Herbicide</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mesotrione</td>
<td>Tenacity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>triclopyr and clopyralid</td>
<td>2-D Herbicide**, Confront**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>triclopyr and fluoroxypr</td>
<td>Tailspin</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Some postemergence herbicide products labeled for control of common chickweed.

*Follow label precautionary statements, restrictions, and directions regarding tolerant turfgrass species, rates, and timing of applications. **Clopyralid-containing products should not be used on residential lawns but can be used for treating weeds in non-residential turf.

References


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