

Weeds can be controlled now

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Poison ivy is starting to look pretty good in Ohio. The beautiful red fall color is showing up in woodlots as well as along highways, vining and climbing up the trees.

Despite the fact that it may cause serious issues with gardeners, we have to admit that the fall color is rather beautiful, right?

However, this plant is not something that we desire nor intentionally plant in our landscapes but it always seems to show up in flower beds and gardens.

Now is the most optimal time of the year to start eliminating poison ivy. I said "start" intentionally; poison ivy is not something that you can get rid of in one fell swoop, especially if the plant is mature.

The woody stems and healthy root system make this plant difficult to eradicate. You can pull it but if any root pieces are left, they regrow.

Herbicides work but may require several applications because poison ivy is a woody plant when it matures.

This is the best time of the year to use herbicides. In fact, it's the best time of the year to control perennial weeds in general.

Fall is when perennial and woody plants begin to store sugars for the winter. They are actively moving the sugars through the stems and into the root systems.

Therefore, if a herbicide application is made to the leaf surface now, and is absorbed into the plant, it gets into the phloem system and works its way down to the roots.

Broadleaf weeds in the lawn should be controlled now as well because the same thing is occurring.

Dandelions, buckthorn and other broadleaf weeds in the lawn can be easily spot treated. If you have a lot of them, check to see if there is any weed and feed product still available. Chances are you may not find this as it's usually sold in the spring.

Don't forget to fertilize the lawn while at the same time controlling weeds. A good thick lawn is the first barrier to annoying weeds.

And finally, the other type of weed to deal with right now is the winter annuals. You have heard mention these several times this season as I am dealing with them in my perennial beds.

These are the ones that have germinated recently and are rather small and are lurking in the flower beds.

Once nice spring weather hits, they will take off and spread seed everywhere.

Clean the beds up now and apply a preemergent herbicide under your mulch for double protection.