

Why it's important not to rush to kill those dandelions

Pamela Corle-Bennett
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Ohio State University Extension - Clark County

My mother-in-law and I had a brief conversation this past weekend about the person who decided that lawns should be green. I totally agree with her that lawns don't have to be all green!

When my husband Rick and I were getting ready to plant grass seed for our new lawn, I first asked him what color he thought the lawn should be. Of course, he gave me that look that all spouses are familiar with - are you crazy??? Green of course, was his answer.

Allow me to explain. I don't need a perfectly green lawn. I am ok with the yellows of the dandelions (going strong right now) and the white of clover and the purple of violets. I am fine with all of these in the lawn.

My husband and many others as well, disagree with me. They don't like dandelions or any other color but green. It might be a man thing because my son and father are the same way.

I respect this. As I always tell people when talking about garden philosophies, your philosophy is yours and yours alone. Only you know what you like in the garden and it doesn't matter if it's right or wrong. It's yours.

In my case, Rick and I have come to an agreement. The area near the house is weed-free and nice and green and the rest of the area is a little colorful. His area is quite beautiful and lush green, I have to admit.

This discussion came up again this weekend because the dandelions are indeed in full glorious bloom and at Easter gatherings, everyone was asking how to get rid of them.

Those of you chomping at the bit to eliminate them need to back off and wait. This is for your own good, of course.

Resist the urge to kill the dandelions while in full bloom. I know that this is hard to do for some but hang in there.

Research shows that using herbicides to kill dandelions when they are at "puffball" stage is the most effective in killing them.

Puffball stage might be occurring this weekend in many areas of the Miami Valley if it hasn't already. It's at this stage that the plant absorbs herbicides the best and therefore, leads to maximum control.



Products listed for dandelion control are available at garden centers and can be used to control a wide variety of broadleaf weeds, including buckthorn, plantain and others.

You can either spot-treat the dandelions or use a weed and feed product that fertilizes at the same time it controls the weeds.

Keep in mind in order for these herbicides to be effective, they need to be on the weed's leaf surface for a period of time in order to be absorbed. Read the label.

And by the way, bees love dandelion flowers so let the blooms satisfy the bee's needs and then take care of the dandelions later (at puffball stage)!