

Turfgrass Information on the Information Superhighway



Turfing The Net

There is a wealth of turfgrass information on the Internet. For example, you can retrieve a fact sheet on moss and algae control, get all the latest information on turf equipment, see color photographs of turf diseases, and find a discussion of common pesticides.

6

There is a wealth of knowledge on the Internet. I'd guess there's more turf and landscape information on it than you could read in a lifetime. This article is a brief introduction to the Internet. Perhaps it will stimulate nonusers to give the Net a try.

What Is the Internet?

In 1969 the U.S. Department of Defense began to develop a communication system that could survive a nuclear war. What has evolved from this is the Internet — a gigantic computer network that connects computers all over the world. They are linked together by satellites, telephone lines and modems. The Internet is often referred to as the "Information Superhighway" or "cyberspace." Anyone who has access to this communication system has access to millions of pieces of information.

On the Internet you can visit the White House, get the most recent weather forecast, watch a video clip on how to use a sand wedge, discover what the ten worst performing stocks are (I own five of them), buy a computer, find the value of a used car, and check whether the striped bass are running off Montauk.

There's a lot of turf and landscape information too. For example, you can retrieve a fact sheet on moss and algae control, get all the latest information on turf equipment from the

manufacturer's Web sites, see color photographs of turf diseases, find a discussion of common pesticides and their effects on earthworms, read the National Park Service's IPM program for gypsy moth control, look at a list of Kentucky bluegrass cultivars recommended for athletic fields or fairways, or get a listing of turf and landscape jobs that are available. This is just the tip of the iceberg.

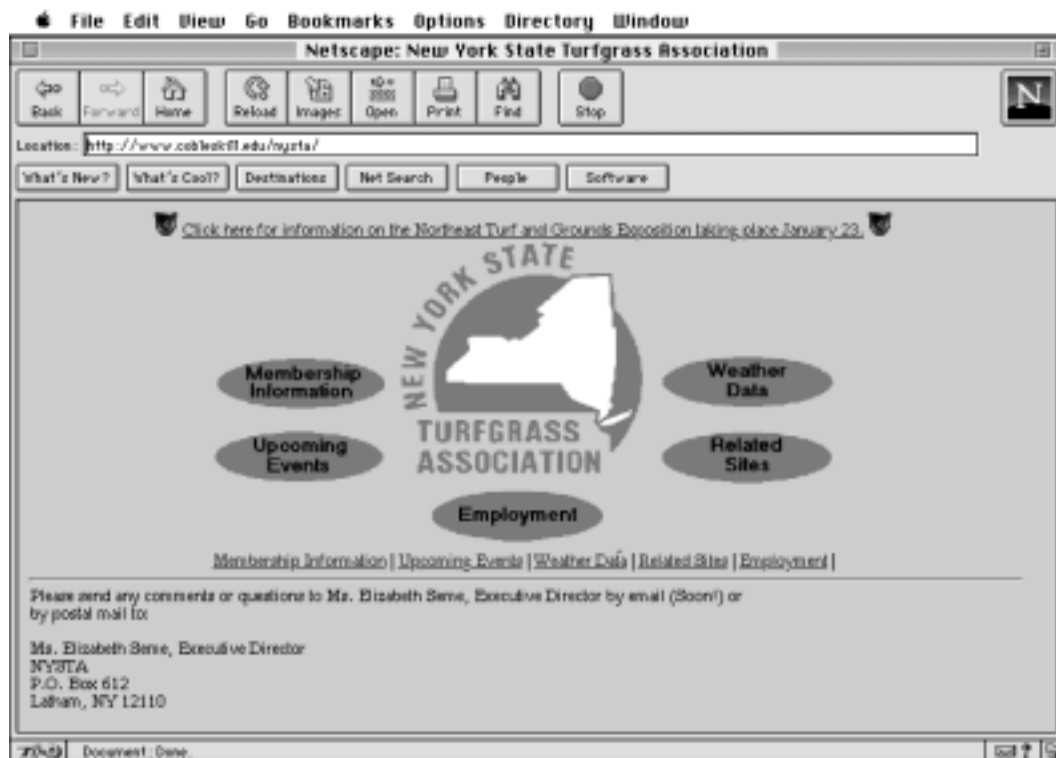
The World Wide Web

The World Wide Web (WWW) organizes and links together thousands of Internet sites. The Web allows you to visit and retrieve information from these sites. A Web browser program, such as Netscape Navigator or Microsoft Internet Explorer, enables you to move easily from one Web site to another simply by clicking on a highlighted word with your computer's mouse.

Getting Started

To get started you need a computer, monitor, modem, and an Internet Service Provider, such as America Online, to hook you up to the Web. You will probably want a sound card for your computer (Macs have sound built in) and speakers so you can listen to Web sites that have audio and also play CDs. A printer is a good idea also.

continued on page 10



The New York State Turfgrass Association's home page on the World Wide Web.

Turfing the Net

continued from page 6

The Cornell Turfgrass Team is planning to go online with their own Web site in 1997. It will contain research reports, plant pest profiles, pest control recommendations, and regional growing degree day information.

The educational video *Low Input Lawn Care (LILAC)* developed under the direction of Dr. Frank Rossi has been awarded the 1996 Certificate of Excellence by the American Society of Agronomy.

10

Most computers sold today are Pentiums, have 16 MB of Random Access Memory, a Super VGA card for graphics, and at least a gigabyte of hard disk storage space. The standard speed for a modem is 28.8 baud. Now, if this doesn't mean much to you, either talk to your twelve-year old, or visit a computer store. Most computer store employees can give you good advice on your specific requirements.

The December 1996 issue of *Golf Course Management* has an excellent article on computers and the Internet (pp. 79-99). You should be able to purchase all the stuff you need for around \$2,000.

To hook up with the Web you need an Internet Service Provider. America Online, CompuServe and Prodigy are three commercial services that provide Web access for a fee. There also are county and regional access providers. Subscriber charges usually start at about \$20 per month.

Places To Go

When you want to visit a Web site, you type in its address (referred to by computer nerds as the URL — Uniform Resource Locator). For example, a good place to try first is the New York State Turfgrass Association's Web site. Type in: <http://cobleskill.edu/nysta> (do not include the brackets) and you will arrive at NYSTA's home

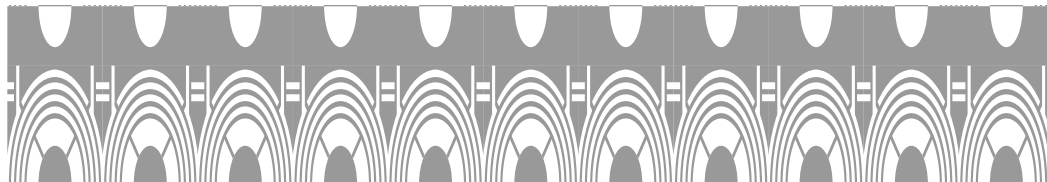
page (see graphic on page 6). If you click on the "related sites" icon, you will find a list of other turfgrass Web sites. By clicking on one of them you will go immediately to that site, which, in turn, has links to other turf Web sites.

Sites you visit regularly can be bookmarked. Rather than typing in the address each time you can go directly to the Web site by clicking on its name in your list of bookmarks. Net searches can be very productive and a lot of fun. If you want to look for information on a certain pest, for example, you can enter its name and do a search. You may locate hundreds of documents that discuss the pest.

The Cornell Turfgrass Team is planning to go online with their own Web site in 1997. It will contain research reports, plant pest profiles, pest control recommendations, and regional growing degree day information.

Don't despair if you have problems loving your computer. Things can get very confusing at times. I take solace from a story I read about the mother of one of the world's greatest computer experts. A reporter said that she must be very impressed by her son's intelligence. She replied, "I was until he tried to make up the gas and oil mixture for my snowblower last winter."

PROFESSOR ROBERT E. EMMONS, TURFGRASS PROGRAM LEADER
SUNY COBLESKILL



Short Cuts

continued from page 2

Low Input Lawn Care (LILAC) Wins!

The educational video entitled Low Input Lawn Care (LILAC) developed at the University of Wisconsin-Madison under the direction of Dr. Frank Rossi and produced by Dave Luciani has been awarded the 1996 Certificate of Excellence by the American Society of Agronomy. The video is available in three 30 minute modules and has been featured on satellite broadcast and public television programs throughout the country.

The modules are 1) Starting out Right; Selection and establishment of Turfgrass; 2) Primary Culture; Mowing Fertilizing, and Watering; and 3) Solving common problems; shade, thatch, and weeds. This video is geared for the homeowner or lawn care professional who desires to provide a more resource efficient lawn care program. It is based on turfgrass biology and ecology with an emphasis on the link among quality expected, use desired and maintenance performed.

If you would like copies of the video series you can contact the University of Wisconsin-Extension at (608) 265-2527.