

The Lawn Reader

Turfgrass entomology has grown over the 15 years Mike Villani served at Cornell. Many major advances, especially with soil insects, were developed by the Villani Soil Insect Laboratory. True to the Land Grant University mission, the research needed to be transferred to other turfgrass researchers and managers. Therefore, several texts, including one with Mike as a coauthor, have been published in the last few years.



From the Shelves of the Villani Soil Insect Laboratory

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The three books reviewed here represent a spectrum of the presentation of insect information. Clearly, the revision of the Tashiro text remains the cornerstone of the scientific discipline, however, two other practically written references by Potter, Shetlar and Niemczyk would be a valued addition to any manager's library.

The Bible Revised

Turfgrass Insects of the United States and Canada, Second Edition

Patricia J. Vittum, Michael G. Villani, Haruo Tashiro

Cornell University Press
ISBN: 0-8014-3508-0

Occasionally there is a book that stands alone as a standard reference that all other books will be judged against. When Haruo Tashiro wrote the first edition of *Turfgrass Insects* in 1987, the field of turfgrass entomology was beginning to grow. For over a decade it was the definitive text on insects in turf, but with expansion of the discipline came new ideas and research based information. Clearly, a second edition was needed.

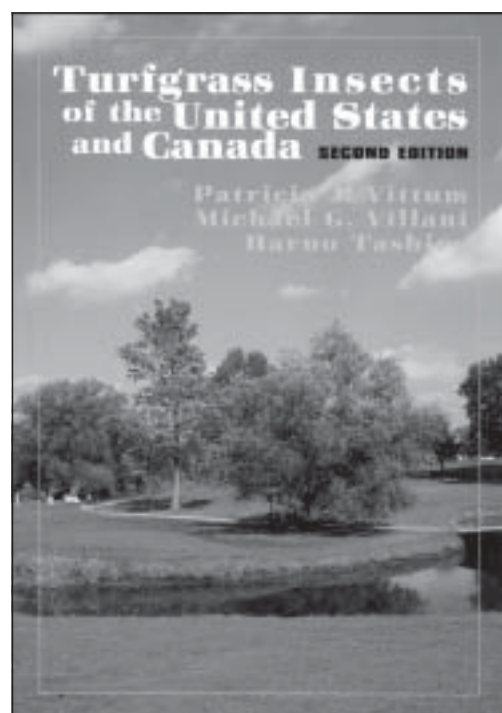
Turfgrass Insects is a heavily referenced treatise of every insect and insect-like organism that is associated with turfgrass in the United States and Canada. The opening chapter overview of turfgrass management is brief but informative, as is the introductory insect chapter. This book assumes the reader has some understanding of the turfgrass entomology field.

The next twenty chapters provide a complete review of turfgrass insects that cover each pest from its importance, history and distribution to seasonal biology and a description of the

damage. The center section of the text represents a true milestone: seventy pages filled with the finest photographs, painstakingly collected by the authors, and with a generous donation from the New York State Turfgrass Association, presented in full color. These pages are worth the price of the book.

The closing chapters address the principles and practices of Integrated Pest Management, a term derived from entomological research. The chapter on biological control strategies provides the latest information on natural insect enemies, as well biological agents. The closing chapter on chemical control will not be dated for many years as it avoids specific efficacy information regarding insecticides. However, it provides an concise overview of the environmental and ecological aspects of insecticide use that any student of the discipline should know.

While this is not the kind of text a manager would grab to solve an immediate insect problem, it is one that should be available to help avoid insect problems. Its readability and photos make it a "must" for anyone interested in turfgrass management.



Books Like This Don't "Just Happen"

Destructive Turfgrass Insects: Biology, Diagnosis and Control

Daniel A. Potter

Ann Arbor Press

ISBN: 1-57504-023-9

In the preface, Cornell University alumnus Dan Potter '78 states, "High quality lawns, golf courses and other fine turfs don't just happen; they require careful attention and skillful management." It follows then that a book such as *Destructive Insects* received the same careful attention and skillful management. It did.

Potter pens an important, user friendly review of the management of insect pests. This book spends considerably much less time on reviewing all aspects of biology, history and distribution as compared to Vittum et al. Also, this book is organized in a way that conveys its intention to be a management text as compared to a reference text.

The opening seven chapters serve as an excellent introduction to IPM with extensive attention paid to insecticides. Chapters four through seven review important aspects of insecticide chemistry, effectiveness and the relationship to environmental stewardship. While much of this information is available in general pesticide references, Potter's perspective is unique and worth the review.

The remaining insect chapters are organized by the type of injury caused and essentially work from the ground up. Each pest is reviewed briefly, but enough information is provided to make management decisions. Also, the selected references in each chapter offer the reader the option of exploring the pest information more thoroughly.

The closing chapters on nuisance pests, beneficials and vertebrates warrants specific attention. These are often overlooked aspects of turfgrass management, but must be considered as we recognize the impact of our practices beyond pest management.

Dan Potter has produced a valuable reference for turfgrass managers interested in managing destructive insect pests, who might also endeavor to understand more than the basic information. This is a very readable text that is light on alternative control strategies but provides an excellent perspective on responsible use of insecticides.

An Insect Guide for the Truck

Destructive Turf Insects, Second Edition

Harry D. Niemczyk and David J. Shetlar

H.D.N Books

ISBN: 1-883751-14-4

This handy, photo-filled field reference book is ideally suited for turfgrass professionals who need to solve immediate turfgrass insect problems. Designed as a field guide, the book is filled with excellent control information and other experiences from two seasoned professionals.

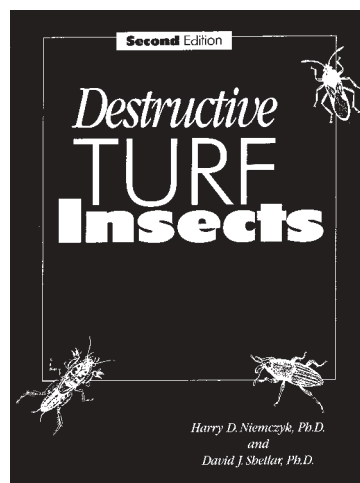
Harry and Dave, as they are referred to in the text, have compiled a book that provides a brief overview and diagnostic section for each insect pest. After proper diagnosis, there are sections that address the principles of controlling each insect pest organized by where they inhabit the system and how they injure the turf.

The control information reviews important aspects of timing and placement, as well as environmental influences. However, a quick reference for various regional turf situations provides a concise guide for preventing and solving insect problems.

The closing chapters on monitoring equipment and symptom similarity are excellent resources for turfgrass managers. The photos in chapter ten are excellent training tools for lawn care or garden center professionals who may be charged with diagnosing from pictures.

The Harry and Dave book is an important field guide for turf managers. In spite of the fact that much of the chemical recommendations will need to be refined for your local situation and will eventually date the text, these experienced field entomologists impart their wisdom in an easy to read format.

Frank S. Rossi



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