

CUTT

2007 Issue 1 • Volume 18 • Number 1

Don't Fear the Weevil! Managing the Annual Bluegrass Weevil

When we went out to survey annual bluegrass weevil populations in 2004 we missed the mark. The small black insects were more anxious than we were to get their activities off the ground on the fairways where we had chosen to study their seasonal fluctuations. At one of our two sites, adults were already detected on the first survey date April 17th. And we were off the mark again in 2005, not because we had not learned our lesson and gotten to the course soon after snowmelt, but because populations were so low that they were barely detectable. Yet one fairway over, they had emerged in such serious numbers that we could almost feel the reverberations of their boring and chewing as they laid into the margins of the tee box and the fairway edge. The superintendent had never seen such severe problems in that sector of the course before.

In fact, golf course superintendents throughout NY and the Northeast were sobered by the ravages of annual bluegrass weevil in 2005. Many experienced the weevils outbreaking in areas where they had not been problematic the previous years. Others experienced such an unpredictable recolonization by overwintering adults, and such a chaotic development of the spring and summer generations, that it was dizzying to ascertain where the insect was in its life cycle. These are "where" and "when" targeting issues: predicting *in space* which areas of the golf course will have problems, and predicting *in time* the opportune moment to target susceptible life stages with controls. The unpredictability of 2005 meant damage to high

visibility areas (like the edges of tees, greens and fairways), and it meant laying out control applications not once, but two or three times against the same generation, sometimes five times over the course of the summer. The upshot: stress on already tight insecticide budgets and another reason to fall short of exaggerated golfer expectations.

Why is this insect so challenging to manage and what strategies should we pursue to improve our chances of keeping it in check? In this article we summarize the problem, the challenges and the perspectives for annual bluegrass weevil management. We will also

continued on page 6

This Times

1. Don't Fear the Weevil!

2. Clippings

- 2007 Field Day
- New IPM Educator

3. Scanning the Journals

- Does Coring Increase Runoff?
- Source of N Effects Putting Surface Performance

4. Trotta Receives Award

12. Healthy Ecosystem

The Turf Pesticides and Cancer Risk Database is Now Online

CUTT, "CORNELL UNIVERSITY TURFGRASS TIMES" is published four times per year by the Turfgrass Science Program at Cornell University, Ithaca, New York 14853. Address correspondence to: CORNELL UNIVERSITY TURFGRASS TIMES, 20 Plant Science Building, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14853; phone: (607) 255-1629; email: fsr3@cornell.edu.

Editor: Frank S. Rossi, Ph.D.

Design & Production: NYS Turfgrass Assn. Latham, NY

Cornell University is an equal opportunity, affirmative action educator and employer.

CUTT is copyright © 2007 by Cornell University. All rights reserved. Permission to reproduce any material contained herein must be obtained in writing.

The use of product names or trademarks in this newsletter or by Cornell University does not imply any endorsement of such products.