



ask the landscape professional

Linda K. Lillie of Sprigs & Twigs

Welcome to my weekly series!

Feel free to send me questions you'd like to have me answer and I will do my best to address the ones of most general interest.

Email or mail your questions to: info@sprigsandtwigs.net or Linda Lillie, Sprigs & Twigs Inc, PO Box 245, Gales Ferry, CT 06335

Question of the Week: For some reason, I have an infestation of weeds along the edge of my patio. My lawn looks good (although it's brown), but why would the weeds show up and look like this? ... **Joan**

Linda's Answer: Hi Joan- I periodically write about proper lawn care and you have a great example of what can happen when you cut your grass too short. Most lawn grasses in this area are what are called "cool season" plants. That means that they grow well in the spring and fall when the weather is cool and there is good rainfall, but they don't grow well in the summer. In fact, in the heat of the summer most grasses stop growing and go dormant to save their energy and turn brown. Weeds, on the other hand, are "warm season" plants that do just the opposite- they grow great when the weather is hot in the summer, and their growth greatly diminishes in the spring and the fall when things cool off. The way you can combat weeds is to cut your grass no shorter than 3 1/2" (and leave it even longer in the summer). The longer length helps the grass plant make it through dormancy, but, importantly, shades the weeds and keeps the soil cooler. Weeds don't like shade or cooler soil, and keeping your grass long will keep them in check. Your picture shows a perfect example of what can happen when the edge of the lawn has been cut too short with a weedwacker - soil heats up, crab grass sprouts in the full sun and takes over that little space. Out in the lawn where the mower was set properly, you don't have that problem. When you have a good, healthy lawn growing, weeds don't have a chance. Here's what to do. In September, dig up and throw away what's left of the weeds, add top soil if needed along the edge of your patio and re-seed. Keep the seed and sprouting grass plants moist and in a few weeks, you'll have a nice stand of grass growing. Whether you have a small area like this or a larger area, crabgrass control for 2016 starts in September 2015 by getting good grass to grow to crowd out the weeds next year. One word of caution, before you apply any grass seed, make certain your soil chemistry is correct by doing a soil test. Sprigs & Twigs can do a soil test for a nominal fee and advise if your soil is ready for seed or if any corrective action is needed prior to seeding. Give our office a call.



"Ask the Landscape Professional" articles are all on our website; if you missed any, go to www.SprigsandTwigs.net

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Linda K. Lillie has been President of Sprigs & Twigs, Inc. for the last 19 years. She is a graduate of Connecticut College in Botany, an accredited NOFA Organic Land Care Professional, a Connecticut Master Gardener and a national award winning landscape designer for her design and installation projects..

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