

LOUISIANA HOME LAWN SERIES

A guide to maintaining a healthy Louisiana lawn



Yellow nutsedge

Description

Yellow nutsedge (*Cyperus esculentus* L.) is a warm-season, perennial weed common throughout Louisiana. It has leaves that resemble grass; however, it is a member of the sedge family. Yellow nutsedge does produce seeds, but they are rarely viable. Instead it spreads primarily through tubers produced from rhizomes (underground stems). It prefers areas with wet soil and is usually an indicator of poor drainage. Often confused with purple nutsedge, yellow nutsedge can be distinguished by its yellow seed head.



Identification

Yellow nutsedge has narrow, shiny, grasslike leaves that are bright green in color. Leaves are usually sharply pointed at the tip. Stems are also bright green and are triangular in cross section. Yellow nutsedge produces yellow to light brown inflorescences (clusters of flowers) that extend from the base of the plant on tall stems. Yellow nutsedge produces small white to brown tubers, or nutlets, that grow from the tip of rhizomes (underground stems). For more information on yellow nutsedge identification and characterization, visit the USDA Plants Database at <https://plants.usda.gov>.



Pointed leaf tip

Hint: Yellow nutsedge has light green leaves with pointed leaf tips and is generally taller in height compared to purple nutsedge, which has dark green leaves with rounded leaf tips and is generally shorter. Yellow nutsedge also produces single tubers at the tip of the rhizome.



Yellow inflorescence



Nutlets growing from rhizomes

Cultural Control Practices

The best way to prevent or reduce weed encroachment is to maintain a healthy lawn through proper fertilization and soil pH and regular mowing. Properly maintaining a lawn through these cultural practices promotes dense and vigorous turfgrass, allowing it to better compete with weeds. Below are the recommended mowing heights and nitrogen fertility rates recommended per turfgrass species. Yellow nutsedge thrives in poorly drained or overwatered areas. In excessively wet areas, surface and subsurface drainage may be necessary. Irrigation may need to be reduced or eliminated in chronically wet areas.

Turfgrass	Mowing height	Nitrogen Rate (per 1,000 ft ² per year)
Bermudagrass	1 - 2 inches	2 - 3 pounds
Centipedegrass	1 - 2.5 inches	0.5 - 2 pounds
St. Augustine grass	2.5 - 3 inches	1 - 3 pounds
Zoysia	1 - 2.5 inches	0.5 - 2 pounds

Chemical Control Practices

In addition to cultural practices, herbicide applications may be required to achieve effective weed control. Herbicides that contain atrazine, simazine, metsulfuron, trifloxysulfuron, dicamba and quinclorac are most effective on yellow nutsedge. Often multiple applications are necessary to provide satisfactory control.

When applying any type of herbicide, you must follow the manufacturer's labeled directions. For more information regarding pesticides for turfgrass, please reference the Louisiana Suggested Chemical Weed Control Guide at the LSU AgCenter website www.lsuagcenter.com.

	St. Augustine grass	Centipedegrass	Zoysia	Bermudagrass
Postemergence Herbicide Active Ingredients				
halosulfuron	✓	✓	✓	✓
sulfosulfuron	✓	✓	✓	✓
imazaquin	✓	✓	✓	✓
sulfentrazone	✓	✓	✓	✓
flazasulfuron		✓	✓	✓
bentazon	✓	✓	✓	✓
metsulfuron + sulfentrazone	✓	✓	✓	✓
trifloxysulfuron			✓	✓
quinclorac + sulfentrazone			✓	✓
thiencarbazone + foramsulfuron + halosulfuron			✓	✓
Preemergence Herbicide Active Ingredients				
metolachlor	✓	✓	✓	✓
dimethenamid-p	✓	✓	✓	✓
dimethenamid + pendimethalin	✓	✓	✓	✓

For information regarding weed identification and control options please contact your local LSU AgCenter Extension Parish Office. To find your local LSU AgCenter Extension Parish Office visit www.lsuagcenter.com.

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