

LOUISIANA HOME LAWN SERIES

A guide to maintaining a healthy Louisiana lawn



Carolina Geranium

Description

Carolina geranium (*Geranium carolinianum* L.), also known as wild geranium, is a biennial or cool-season weed common throughout Louisiana. It is distinguished by its broad, lobed leaves and pink stems. Carolina geranium spreads through seed with flowers blooming in the spring. It is commonly found growing in areas where the turfgrass coverage is thin.



Carolina geranium

Identification

Carolina geranium has green leaves, which extend from long stems. Both stems and leaf edges can have a pink-to-red coloration. Leaves are alternate near the base and opposite above. The leaves are deeply dissected, or lobed, and are divided into segments. Stems extend from the center base of the plant in a radial fashion. Both stems and leaves are hairy. Flowers are white to lavender in color with five petals and are found in two or more clusters at tips of stems and branches. Fruit capsules are linear and narrow at the tip, closely resembling a stork's bill. Carolina geranium is low-growing but can also branch upright once it begins flowering. For more information on Carolina geranium identification and characterization, visit the USDA Plants Database at <https://plants.usda.gov>.



Leaves



Purple flower



Fruit capsule



Pink stems

Cultural Control Practices

The best way to prevent or reduce weed encroachment is to maintain a healthy lawn through proper fertilization and soil pH management 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 for each turfgrass species. In addition to these lawn care practices, manual removal of weeds may also be necessary.

Turfgrass	Mowing Height	Nitrogen Rate (per 1,000 ft ² per year)
Bermudagrass	1 - 2 inches	Up to 3 pounds
Centipedegrass	1 - 2.5 inches	Up to 2 pounds
St. Augustinegrass	2.5 - 3 inches	Up to 3 pounds
Zoysia	1 - 2.5 inches	Up to 2 pounds

Chemical Control Practices

In addition to cultural practices, herbicide applications may be required to achieve effective weed control. Carolina geranium is very susceptible to post-emergence herbicides containing the active ingredients 2,4-D or metsulfuron. See the table below for herbicides that are recommended for Carolina geranium 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. Augustinegrass	Centipedegrass	Zoysia	Bermudagrass
Preemergence Herbicide Active Ingredients				
simazine	✓	✓	✓	✓
atrazine	✓	✓	✓	dormant
Postemergence Herbicide Active Ingredients				
simazine	✓	✓	✓	✓
atrazine	✓	✓	✓	dormant
2,4-D + dicamba + mecoprop	✓	✓	✓	✓
2,4-D + dicamba + mecoprop + carfentrazone	✓	✓	✓	✓
thiencarbazone + iodosulfuron + dicamba	✓	✓	✓	✓
penoxulam + sulfentrazone + dicamba + 2,4-D	✓	✓	✓	✓
metsulfuron	✓	✓	✓	✓
metsulfuron + dicamba	✓	✓	✓	✓
metsulfuron + sulfentrazone	✓	✓	✓	✓

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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