


New Plants For Spring



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Weed-killers & Rose Sawflies

There two more weed-killers appearing on the market (or they will be soon) but neither is worth the expense. Stick with 2,4-D, Mecoprop and Dicamba still; and about rose sawflies!


by Art Drysdale

by Art Drysdale


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Art Drysdale, a life-long resident of Toronto and a horticulturist well known all across Canada, is now a resident of Parksville, British Columbia on Vancouver Island, just north of Nanaimo. He has renovated an old home and has a new garden there. His radio gardening vignettes are heard in south-western Ontario over two radio stations: Easy 101 FM out of Tillsonburg at 2 PM weekdays and CD98.9 FM out of Norfolk County at 11:40 AM weekdays.


Art also has his own website at <http://www.artdrysdale.com>

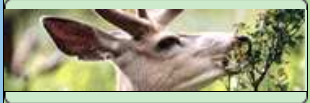


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Check out Donna's Blog at AccuWeather.com

May 8, 2011

Above: No good news for dandelion control with the latest so-called weed-killers! (Author photos). Below: Bristly roseslug, European roseslug and damage, and Curled roseslug respectively; all photos courtesy Baldo Villegar at www.sactorose.org.


With all of the local and provincial bans on the use of so-called 'cosmetic' pesticides, such as 2,4-D, Roundup (weedkillers), Diazinon (insecticide) and Funginex (fungicide), there seems to have been a flurry of new products being introduced to the market. In my April 10 article I wrote here about Serenade Garden a new 'natural' fungicide that seems to be working well for those gardeners who have already tried it, mostly for the control of damping-off disease in seedlings.

One new weed killer that arrived last year was Fiesta. I first learned about it just exactly a year ago, and was not too impressed when I read the label and other comments. It is a product that comes from Neudorff--a German company, and is distributed by Neudorff North America (Eco-Care Technologies) in Saanichton (near Victoria), British Columbia. Basically it is a form of Iron (Fe), present as FeHEDTA) at 4.43 percent.


While there would appear to be several major negatives to Fiesta when compared with the old weed-control products such as 2,4-D, Mecoprop and Dicamba, perhaps the most important difference is that in order to be effective much larger percentages of actual product are required to get control of (a much smaller actual number 13 vs. 50) of weed species than with the old 2,4-D products. Perhaps the two most popular old products (still available in some provinces including here in B.C. but just this past week the new NDP leader here introduced a bill to *ban all cosmetic pesticides with two weeks—how ridiculous!*) Scotts Killex, and Wilson Lawn WeedOut, required about 10.4 grams of 2,4-D per 1000 square feet; whereas the rate of active ingredient of Fiesta is 32.92 to 65.85 grams Fe per 1000 square feet. That is three to six times more active ingredient—hardly a step forward!

The cost of an application of Fiesta may range from 13 to 26 dollars per 1000 square feet. This represents a cost that is 31 to 62 times higher than Killex. Simply because of its cost, Fiesta may be better suited for limited spot applications, and certainly cannot be a major component in a complete home weed control program. And, be-cause the cost of this product is prohibitive, there may be issues with some cheating lawn care operators who will "spike" their blanket weed control programmes with 2,4-D and illegal beet juice in order to provide effective weed control. This would give the false

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impression that Fiesta is efficacious and economical—which it certainly is not.

So, my bottom line on Fiesta would have to be, “Don’t buy it!”

Now, just this past week, Pam Charbonneau, Turf Specialist for the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs at the University of Guelph, published a new research piece in *Horticulture Review* magazine published by Landscape Ontario Horticulture Trade Association, on still another new weed killer. This one was developed by a Quebec company which commercializes products made from dairy ingredients. It is a division of the cheese manufacturing company Suputo. Called Organo-sol, the product, is manufactured from fermented dairy ingredients. Active ingredients are citric acid and lactic acid (produced by lactic acid bacteria). Apparently, the product has one major draw-back—it smells like a mixture of orange juice and sour milk. I would not think that most homeowners would want to have that applied to their lawns!

It is labelled for the control of bird’s foot trefoil, black medick, clover and wood sorrel in established lawns.

A research trial was conducted following the label rate and timing directions by Pam Charbonneau. Treatments were applied in 2010 on May 26, June 7, June 21, July 5 and July 19. The research site was an area of established turf (a mixture of Kentucky bluegrass and turf-type perennial ryegrass infested with dandelions, black medick, clover, narrow-leaved plantain and other lawn weeds). For comparison purposes there were two other treatments—one a control where nothing was applied, and the second where Par III (2,4-D, Mecoprop and Di-camba) was applied, also according to label directions.

For the first week following application the grass showed phytotoxicity to the grass and weed leaves, turning them light brown to yellow. The grass phytotoxicity lasted for about one week.

Organo-sol gave poor control of dandelions but this is known, and dandelions are not listed on the Organosol label. The product did give good control of clover, black medick and total broad leaf weeds. Organosol gave the same level of control for clover and black medick as the Par III, reducing the clover by roughly 70 percent. Overall the total weeds were reduced by the new product by 66 percent but the reduction was not as great as the reduction in total weeds with Par III, which was a 95 percent over the untreated area.

Pam Charbonneau, in summary, said about the product: “It is unclear whether this level of damage [in the first week after application] will be acceptable in the marketplace. In addition, the smell of the product is unpleasant and may also have a bearing on how well it is accepted in the marketplace. The need for five applications in a season for efficacy may also be a deterrent to the adoption of this new product by the lawn care market.

* * *

Immediately after finishing my article last week, Becky Corken (likely from Ontario somewhere) wrote to Donna Dawson with a related question: “Hi. Last year I had an infestation of sawflies. Could you please tell me if they overwinter and if so how do I know if they are still on my roses. What is the best way to get rid of them? I don’t use insecticides because of the birds. Any info would be greatly appreciated. Thanks. Have a great day.”

Well, Becky, rose sawflies are quite different from those that attack the veggies I mentioned last week. Some will over-winter in the soil, and one possibly in the rose stems themselves. There are actually three types of sawflies that attack roses, and while some have only one generation per year, another can have two, and still another even three to six! While there are actions you can take to prevent their attack (such as closely examining both leaf surfaces of all foliage, starting in mid-spring, and physically removing the what appear to be [but are not] caterpillars).

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Your desire NOT to use insecticides is a tall order when trying to get rid of these insects! You certainly may use a good insecticidal soap (still available in Ontario) but you absolutely must be certain to spray both sides of all leaves and actually get the soap onto the insects or it will not work.

As far as insecticides go, any insecticide will kill sawflies, but most will have to make contact with the sawflies. One that might fit your needs is Neem oil, available at most Canadian garden centres, but which does not advertise on its label that it is actually an insecticide. I have written about Neem Oil here many times; you could check my May 30, 2004 item for a few more details:
<http://www.icangarden.com/document.cfm?task=viewdetail&itemid=5098> .

One idea you might also consider is driving to the U.S. and obtaining one of the systemic insecticides (such as Monterey Agri-Fos or Bayer Movento), or *any other systemic* being sold in the U.S. city you choose.

Just one final note, do not let someone suggest you use *Bacillus thuringensis*—it works on caterpillars, but the sawflies are not caterpillars, and hence it does not work.

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