

Dollar Spot

TREE DOCTOR TIPS | LAWN

Dollar Spot (*Sclerotinia homeocarpa*)

DESCRIPTION:

Dollar spot is caused by a fungus that causes blight to grass blades, but does not harm roots or crowns. Infections start as small circular areas about the size of a silver dollar, hence the name.

HOSTS:

Dollar spot is commonly found on lawns with excessive thatch and low moisture in the soil. It also is found in lawns with low fertility.

BIOLOGY AND SYMPTOMS:

This fungus is active from late spring through early fall. High humidity and air temperatures of 65° to 80° F encourage the growth of dollar spot. Infected areas of turf are straw-colored, matted patches about the size of silver dollars. Dollar spot can infect turf along the tracks made by lawn mowers and lawns mowed higher than two inches. These infected patches are usually larger and more irregular.

Fine, “cobwebby” fungal threads (*mycelium*) may be evident in infected areas in the morning, when dew is present. Individual leaf blades display an hourglass-shaped lesion, or spot, which is straw-colored with a reddish-brown margin.

MANAGEMENT:

A fungicide application program may be necessary when dollar spot is prevalent. Good cultural practices can also reduce the potential for dollar spot to infect your lawn. These include removing excess thatch, maintaining adequate fertility and soil moisture, and seeding or sodding with disease-resistant cultivars. Also, do not mow when the turf is wet. To find out which fungicide may be best for your property, consult your local landscape professional.



FIGURE A. SYMPTOMS OF DISTINCT DISCOLORATION IN ST. AUGUSTINEGRASS (Photo credit: Florida Division of Plant Industry, Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Bugwood.org)

FIGURE B. DOLLAR SPOT IN ZOYSIAGRASS

*The scientists at **The Davey Institute** laboratory and research facility support our arborists and technicians in diagnosing and prescribing based on the latest arboricultural science. For specific treatment and application details, your arborist may consult *The Davey Institute's Plant Health Care Book.**

