

# Fairy Rings

Fairy Rings are one of the most common lawn “pests”.

The rings themselves are a symptom of a fungus that thrives in lawns and other turf areas (the “roots” of the fungus, the mycelium, constrict the roots of the lawn).

They are usually noticed after heavy rains when tan mushrooms appear in a ring shaped pattern or during regular weather when circular or semi-circular areas of dead/dying turf appear. These areas have a margin of darker green turf just next to them. These darker areas are due to the fungus releasing nitrogen.

As the rings develop they grow outward and down - the mycelium can extend down into the soil several feet. Fairy rings are spread either by spores or infected soil. Fairy Ring is also spread if dethatching and aerating equipment is used on an infected lawn and then used on a healthy lawn.



**780-467-7557**

[greenlandgarden.com](http://greenlandgarden.com)

[gardening@greenlandgarden.com](mailto:gardening@greenlandgarden.com)

## Preventing Fairy Ring

Keeping the lawn healthy with regular fertilizing and watering will help keep the fungus suppressed. During dry spells, water once a week for an hour or two; deep infrequent waterings are more beneficial for the lawn than shallow frequent waterings.

## Treating Fairy Ring

Though there are several products in development, there is currently not a product that will eliminate the fungus. However there are a couple of different methods to suppress the growth of fairy rings, to the point where they are no longer visible.

### Spike and Soak

Take a garden fork and poke holes throughout the fairy ring. Then take a pail of water with dish soap added and soak the ring slowly (mix to the same ratio you would use to do dishes). The soap merely helps the dead/dying lawn area to take up significant amounts of water in order to help it re-grow. This needs to be done on a regular basis so the grass can start growing back into the area where it has died off. If the grass in the area is stunted you can fertilize with a high nitrogen fertilizer, but do not over-fertilize as this will spur the growth of the fungus.



### Digging the Ring Out

This can eliminate the ring, if ALL of the mycelium is carefully dug out. You need to dig the ring out approximately 1 foot on either side of the ring and about 1-2 feet down into the soil. All of the infected soil/turf will need to be placed on a tarp to prevent contamination of the lawn in the area.

You then need to backfill the area with clean soil (preferably with lots of organic material added such as compost or soil booster). Then you can re-seed or re-sod. Make sure to keep the area well fertilized and watered to suppress any further growth of the fungus.



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