



# Sod Webworm: How to Reclaim Your Turf!

If you have a lawn that is looking less green and more brownish, you may need to take a closer look at your lawn before dismissing the brown patches as simple drought damage.

Manitoba has experienced severe drought conditions in most areas over the past few growing seasons and our greenery and lawns are showing the signs of stress due to the lack of water.

Lawns that are stressed by drought tend to be weakened and are more susceptible to weed and pest problems. The main culprit we are hearing about and seeing is Sod Webworm in and around Winnipeg.

## Sod Webworm: What are they & What do they do?

Sod webworms at larval stage are smooth, green or light brown caterpillars. They range from 2mm – 25mm ( ¼ in – 1 inch) in length, with rows of spots on their bodies.

The webworms themselves are nocturnal & emerge in the evening and feed on the grass blades. Webworm damage can be seen in Kentucky Bluegrass, perennial ryegrass, most fescues and bentgrass. The larvae overwinter in the soil and the adult moths emerge with warmer temperatures in the spring.



**Adult Sod Webworm Moths** or lawn moths are small whitish, tan or brown in colour with a snout like projection from the head.

When at rest they wrap their wings around their body to form a tube shape. They fly out of the lawn as you mow or walk through the lawn especially in the evening/night. As the moths fly over the lawn they lay their eggs for the next round of caterpillars. Egg laying peak times in June & August. The eggs hatch about 2 weeks later.



**What are the signs & symptoms of sod webworms?** You may notice brown patches in your lawn that get larger and spread versus a urine spot from a dog that stays the same size until repaired. The spots can spread and join with other patches as the lawn begins to have a 'thinned out' look and turns brown.



## What to watch for:

- \*Brown patches that get larger
- \*Small white/tan/brown moths in the
- \*Lawn with more brown than green
- \*Thinned out looking lawn
- \*Increased bird activity

You may also notice increased bird activity on your lawn. Skunks & racoons may also start to visit your lawn in the evening as they dig up the webworms to feast on. Leaving tell tale little 'craters' in your lawn.

## How to avoid sod webworms?

Lawns that are healthy, and receive regular adequate watering and feeding can typically tolerate and recover from sod webworm attack. However, we are seeing webworms in stressed and healthy lawns due to the levels of infestation. Watering your lawn deeply, at least once a week is the first and best step towards avoiding most lawn issues including sod webworm.

Diagnosing sod webworm early goes a long way in stopping their damage and controlling their spread.

Sod webworms can clean out a lawn in no time and spread quickly to a neighbouring lawn. This allows them to spread throughout a neighbourhood often undetected and or misdiagnosed as drought damage.

**How to reclaim your turf!** As with anything it's easier to prevent that to eradicate. However, there are products that can be used to reclaim your lawn. You may choose to use insecticides, which can be used to specifically target sod webworm.

For those who prefer a more natural approach, Blue Grass Sod Producers Ltd now offers Beneficial Nematodes available for purchase that we have tested on lawns to observe the results for ourselves. We are now satisfied with the results and are pleased to offer them for purchase. It is a natural beneficial nematode product, not chemical based and can be applied easily by homeowners without fear of harming themselves, their children, family, friends, pets or environment with chemicals. Application can be done using a garden hose and hose end sprayer.

**Please call our office for more info or to place an order.**

**204-269-3052**

**The treatment is temperature sensitive and needs to be kept cool during transportation. We will contact you when your order is ready to arrange pick up.**

**\*\*Note this treatment is not effective on cutworms.**



## Not sure if there's larvae in your lawn?

Perform a simple drench test to find out. Mix about 2 tablespoons of liquid dish soap with 4 litres of water and pour it over the patch of brown grass. It's a good idea to extend your test patch slightly past the browned out area of grass. Wait 5 – 15 minutes, if larvae are present they will usually come to the surface.

## Reclaim Your Turf!

- Easily applied using a garden hose and hose end sprayer.
  - Natural
  - Chemical Free
  - Cost Effective
  - Safe for People, Pets & Environment
  - 1 package treats 1000 sq.ft.
  - \$29.99/package
- Call us today and reclaim your turf!