# Fall is best for control of tough weeds

Fall is the best time of year to control tough perennial weeds in the landscape or on the farm or acreage. At this time of year they begin moving carbohydrates



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leaves down to the roots for winter storage. If herbicides are applied now, they are transported to the

roots along with the carbohydrates, killing the entire plant instead of just the leaves. And even if the chemical doesn't completely kill the weed, the plant goes into winter in a weakened condition and is much more susceptible to winter kill. Finally, the potential for 2,4-D and dicamba herbicide drift damage to nontarget species is lessened in the fall.

Fall is also the best time to control winter annual weeds, such as Henbit, Marestail and the mustards (field pennycress, Shepherds purse, Tansy mustard, Blue Mustard, etc.). Winter annual weeds germinate in the fall, overwinter as a small rosette of foliage and begin growing again in early spring. They



Cattails can take over areas if they are not contained the proper way.

complete their life cycle and **Lawns** go to seed in spring or early summer. In fall they can be killed as they germinate with pre-emergent herbicides or targeted as young plants with post-emergent

Before applying any herbicide, know the weeds you are trying to control. Get help from your local garden center or UNL Extension office if you're not sure. Fall control of annual weeds like crabgrass, foxtail, knotweed or purslane is unnecessary and wasteful. These weeds only live for one summer, and naturally die in fall. In fall, it's best to focus on tough perennial weeds, including musk thistle, Canada thistle, field bindweed, poison ivy, curly dock and cattails.

Weeds are opportunistic, taking advantage of thin areas in a lawn to grow and thrive. So the best way to prevent future weed problems is to overseed and thicken lawn turfgrass stands. The best time for overseeding Kentucky bluegrass and tall fescue is August 15 to September 15. With good soil preparation, seed-soil contact and adequate water, young grass plants can grow well even while weeds are present. Be very careful when using herbicides on new grass seedings; choose herbicides carefully, read and follow label directions.

If chemical control is needed, spot treatments or spraying individual weeds, it saves money on chemicals. Broadcast applications are a waste of money if only a few weeds are present.

Many products are available for broadleaf weed control and may contain 2,4-D, quinclorac or triclopyr. These products are selective and won't damage established grass, but use them with caution in landscape beds since accidental spraying or spray drift can damage shrubs and ornamental plants. Quinclorac is particularly effective at controlling difficult weeds like wild violets.

**Pastures** Fall is an excellent time to control perennial weeds in pastures and waste areas. The post-emergent herbicides mentioned above are effective against thistles, curly dock and poison ivy. There is an extended window to apply herbicides from mid-September through late October in most years. Best control will be achieved if daytime temperatures are above 60 degrees, but good control can be obtained even when temps are in the 50s.

If the use of pre-emergent herbicides is not possible, target winter annuals in the fall with post-emergent herbicides when the seedling plants are small,

and the plant has not had time to store much energy in the root system.

Downy brome is another common winter annual pasture weed. Most seeds germinate in the fall but some may germinate during warm spells in winter and early spring. Plants produce a seed head in June and mature and die in July. In warm season pastures and Conservation Reserve Program areas, take advantage of the winter annual growth habit to control downy brome using glyphosate.

Glyphosate applied in late fall or early spring when warm season pasture grasses are completely dormant will kill downy brome plants without harming the dormant species. Allow eight weeks for the herbicide to kill the downy brome completely before grazing or harvesting.

Note: Glyphosate is a nonselective herbicide and will injure or kill cool season grass and broadleaf species that are actively growing at the time of application.

## **Ponds**

Cattails are one of the most common weeds around ponds. In fall, mechanically removing the tops of cattails is one way to keep them in check and eventually obtain control.

Ideally, plants should be cut below the waterline. If they must be cut above the waterline, the water level should be raised after cutting to submerge the cut

stems at least eight inches. Research in Iowa (Weller, 1975) found that cutting shoots two or three times during the growing season before flower production, reduced a cattail stand by 95 percent to 99 percent in one year. A single cutting in August followed by submergence resulted in 80 percent control. It is important to remove all dead and live cattail stems to achieve this control.

Power equipment that has been used to cut cattails includes sickle mowers and hand-operated power trimmers equipped with metal cutting wheels instead of strings. Hand scythes, machetes (corn knives) and long-handled shovels also have been used to manually cut cattails that are close to the shoreline.

Note: With all chemical applications, be sure to read and follow all directions on labels and use the recommended personal protective equipment.

Sarah Browning is an Extension Educator with University of Nebraska- Lincoln Extension in Lancaster County. Reach her at 402-441-7180; 444 Cherrycreek Road, Suite A, Lincoln, NE 68528; or sbrowning2@unl.edu.



The walk-in closet area is directly off the master bedroom and includes a washer/dryer.



The main floor is very open, combining the kitchen, dining and living areas.

### Home **Continued from G1**

some refinements and pulled it

all together." Over the past 25 years Lewis has built many kinds of houses, including custom homes, and he and his family have lived in them, then moved and lived in another one. But this house is one he views as a long-term residence because of the design and the lot. "It was one of the last original

lots left at Firethorn," he said. After purchasing the lot in August 2013 and selling their house, things moved very quickly. "We began framing on Thanksgiving day," Lewis said. They moved in at the end

of May, last spring. Getting everything done in that short a time is unusual, Johnson said. "It helps that Mark is in the home-building

business." Picking the finishes, refining a floor plan and all of the hundreds of other details that go into building a house are something that Mark and Ellie Lewis had done before. But doing it for a very contemporary-style home was completely different, he said. Interior designer Diane Gernstein from Interiors Joan helped with the design details.

From the beginning they knew the color palette woul be grays, white and black. "No browns," Mark Lewis said.

And the couple love the website houzz.com. "It was our Bible," he said. They would see things they liked and decide how they might incorporate them into the house.

Johnson said contemporary-style homes often have distinctive edges and rooflines, sometimes more glass incorporated in the design and good flow from outside to

Because of that view, the entire back of the house is glass, making it both easy to enjoy the scenery and to see what was happening in the pool. Even the master bedroom has access to the view.

The home had to be practical, too. Children — Jonah, 9, Alaina, 12 and Kaeden, 17 - needed their own spaces and places for friends to gather. In addition to their bedrooms, the pool area and downstairs theater room are geared toward that. And son Conner, who attends Iowa State University, needed a bedroom, too.

Surfaces, from the heated floors to the laminate cabinets and quartz countertops. are easy to keep clean.

And there are laundry

areas in practical places. One is right off the giant master dressing room/closet, and another is in the mudroom, near the pool, where towels can be washed and dried easily.

Even Mark Lewis' requested "breezeway," which connects the home to the pool house offers a "back" entry that goes directly to the patio/pool area, bypassing the main house. "That way kids and their friends just go straight to the pool," said Ellie Lewis.

Floors there are stained concrete, which works with the industrial vibe of the pool house with its glass "garage door" that faces the pool and can open up to expand the entertaining area.

And thanks to the structure of the breezeway, the narrow basement room underneath it

was perfect for a wine cellar. Every room has lots of closets for storage since the couple are admitted neatniks. A large pantry off the kitchen holds small appliances, an extra fridge and anything else, so the kitchen counters are clear.

Although they have lived in the house for only four months, it feels right, Mark Lewis said. "This is going to be our home for a long time."

Reach the writer at 402-473-7214 or kmoore@journalstar.com. On Twitter @ LJSkcmoore.

## **Houses on the Architects' Home Tour**

In addition to the home of Mark and Ellie Lewis, 3010 Durant Court, designed by architect Dave Johnson, which is featured in the story, the following homes also are on the Architects' Home Tour:

Dr. Andrew and Sydney Glenn, 1980 S. 116th St. Architect: Peter Hind, **FOUNDarchitects** 

The Glenns wanted their home to expand and contract as their large family changed. They also wanted a connection between the house and a threeacre reconstructed prairie. Parallel stone walls organize public and private spaces. The thermal envelope reduces the cooling load by 30 percent by using super insulation and high-performance R-12 glazing. Geothermal wells provide energy for heating and cooling throughout the year, and radiant floors keep heating loads to a minimum. A white membrane cools the entire roof surface and directs rainwater to wetlands and the prairie landscape. Locally sourced walnut is used to unify the composition and contrast with blackened steel, stone, stucco and recycled glass tile.

Dr. Don Breit, 9341 Tuscan Court.

Architect: Dave Johnson, Studio 951 This prairie-style ranch house with a walk-out lower level is at the end of a long ridge between two fairways at Firethorn Golf Club and has a commanding view of the open countryside to the northeast. The exterior features generous roof overhangs, stone exterior walls and pillars topped with horizontal bands of stucco, ample fixed glass and opening sash windows, and a large outdoor deck off the first floor with a patio below.

The interior layout of the home is oneroom deep with large windows on both the front and back, allowing for views of the front yard and cul-de-sac as well as views of the golf course and horizon from most any point on the main floor.

The plan is a long, open rectangular room that is defined by low dividers, allowing vision from one area to another, but effectively directing flow. The kitchen island separates the kitchen from the eating area, while the low credenza and living room furniture separate the

eating area from the living area. Paula and Matt Metcalf, 9615 Koi Rock Drive. Architect/Owner: Matt Metcalf, Davis Design

This home is located in the Heritage Lakes subdivision and was built in 2012. All houses in this subdivision are required to meet reasonably strict design standards relating to size, scale, material use, color/tones and roof slopes. The design of the house was guided by the following ideas:

Fit within the context of the neighborhood but stretch the boundaries of the design standards relating to roof slope and scale

Take full advantage of the long south view looking out over the cascad-

ing ponds. The house is situated to maximize southern exposure and views. All rooms in the house, except one, are oriented to the southern view overlooking a backyard patio/pool to the ponds beyond. Approximately 80 percent of the south façade is glass, affording maximum views within the home. Passive solar design practices were used to maximize direct solar gain in the winter months and provide solar shading in the summer with the use of deep roof overhangs and strategically located decks.

The first level is an open plan that integrates living, dining, kitchen and exterior deck as one large space and includes a 12-foot high ceiling in the living space. Interior paint colors and the maple wood floor are light and neutral to maximize natural daylight reflection and eliminate the need for any type of artificial light during daylight

Cathy Schlaebitz, 6500 Rexford Drive.

Architect: The late Bill Schlaebitz, AIA Bill Schlaebitz designed this prairiestyle residence for his young family in 1966. It brings the exterior spaces into the home's interior to create rooms that are open, flooded with daylight and offer beautiful views of the landscape.

The foyer offers a dramatic entrance into the home with its large skylight and views of the living areas and the outdoors. This area becomes the circulation hub for the home, flanked on three sides by private quarters, the main living room and the social spaces. The house was designed as a fourbedroom home, but it has since been remodeled to create a larger master suite. A wall was removed between the kitchen and the family room, creating a more open space with the two rooms flowing into each other.

When the children grew up and left the home, the Schaebitzes sold it and moved to a smaller one, but the family repurchased the home in 2009.

Mike and Missy McCullough, 2900 S 28th St. Architect: Jim Hille

The existing 60-year-old trees on the lot now serve a new purpose: prime elements within a modern composition intended to save them. Although the house is relatively open in plan, the way in which it is organized allows for privacy where needed and connections to the outside where appropriate. The home is organized around an open kitchen/dining 'hub' with three areas (master suite, living room and guest suite) pulling away.

Special features to look for include the steel and glass front door (the frame was made in one piece) and the entry sequence.

The kitchen in the home of Mark and Ellie Lewis incorporates easy-toclean surfaces with quartz countertops and laminate cabinets.

