



Is it bad to have mushrooms growing in my lawn?

Answer:

Not really, but elves sure like them! Mushrooms are the spore-producing structures of certain kinds of fungi. Most of these fungi are beneficial because they break down organic matter and release nutrients that are necessary for plant growth. In fall, as the weather begins to cool, mushrooms often pop up in lawns, causing people to wonder where they're coming from and how to control them.

Mushrooms produce tiny spores that are easily blown about in the wind. When these spores reach a favorable place, they germinate and grow. They are very common in areas with decomposing roots or underground stumps from cut down trees, fallen leaves or lawn thatch and other organic matter.

Most people want to control lawn mushrooms. Sorry to say, we have yet to find any chemicals that are effective in controlling them. Most mushrooms are harmless to your lawn, even though you might not like the way they look. The best you can do is to remove them with a rake and de-thatch your lawn in the fall. De-thatching removes the fungi's food source. Simply removing the mushrooms may make your lawn look better, but it will not kill the mycellium from which the mushrooms grow.

You should be extremely cautious about eating wild mushrooms, because many cause illness and some are deadly. Never eat a mushroom unless you are absolutely sure it is safe. A reference book is not enough--there are poisonous mushrooms that look very similar to non-poisonous ones. If you wish to pick wild mushrooms, please get training first!

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