

2002

How Can I Get The Best Of Morningglory Before It Gets The Best Of Me?

Steve Dewey

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalcommons.usu.edu/extension_histall

 Part of the [Horticulture Commons](#)

Warning: The information in this series may be obsolete. It is presented here for historical purposes only. For the most up to date information please visit [The Utah State University Cooperative Extension Office](#)

Recommended Citation

Dewey, Steve, "How Can I Get The Best Of Morningglory Before It Gets The Best Of Me?" (2002). *All Archived Publications*. Paper 377.

http://digitalcommons.usu.edu/extension_histall/377

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Archived USU Extension Publications at DigitalCommons@USU. It has been accepted for inclusion in All Archived Publications by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@USU. For more information, please contact dylan.burns@usu.edu.





A weekly question/answer column

**How Can I Get The Best Of Morningglory
Before It Gets The Best Of Me?**

Steve Dewey answers:*

It may be easier to just enjoy the white or pink flowers with spindly green stems rather than get rid of the complex weed. Effective treatment for field bindweed, commonly referred to as morningglory, is difficult at best.

The deep branching roots and underground shoots spread through the soil in all directions, and new plants form whenever the roots reach the soil surface. Cutting, pulling and digging are not very effective since any live root or root piece left on the soil can quickly regenerate a new top. Rototilling cuts roots and shoots into many small pieces and scatters them, allowing each cut piece to develop into a new plant. The seeds are an additional complication since studies show that they can germinate and form new plants after as many as 50 years of burial in the soil.

Effective bindweed management requires a multi-method approach and on-going attention. No single action will eliminate the problem.

The first step is to use desirable plants to put as much competitive pressure as possible on the morningglory by taking essential nutrients and water away from it. Turf grass is an especially strong competitor. Promote healthy and vigorous growth of desirable plants through proper watering, fertilizer application, disease prevention and insect control. When properly managed, most ornamentals and garden plants can have some suppressing or choking effect on the weed.

Herbicides play an important role in morningglory management. However, if not used in conjunction with pressure from desirable plants, their effects are usually short lived. Systemic herbicides such as Roundup, 2,4-D and dicamba are more effective than digging and pulling because they kill the roots. For best results, these products should be used when the weed is naturally sending large amounts of sugars from its leaves to its roots, usually in early-to mid-June, or late summer to early fall.

When combined with herbicides or competition from desirable plants, mulches can help reduce morningglory. They are especially effective in controlling seedlings and are a valuable tool in addressing the problem of long-lived seeds in the soil.

* Steve Dewey is Utah State University Extension Weed Specialist