



Winter Weeds in Turf and Ornamentals

By Milt McGiffen Department of Botany and Plant Sciences
University of California Riverside, CA

For much of California there is a noticeable change from summer to fall. Within a few weeks, temperatures may change from highs in the 100's to pleasant 70's. Plant species are generally adapted for optimal growth in a specific temperature range. You may start to notice that nutsedge and Bermudagrass that were growing furiously now seem to be standing still.

Weed control programs have to reflect the change in weed emergence and growth. The summer weed control programs that were in place for nutsedge or crabgrass would now do little good and should be discontinued until temperatures warm again in the spring. You will begin to notice many of the winter weeds begin to appear, such as: malva, groundsel, London rocket and other mustards, stinging nettle, pineapple weed, prickly lettuce, and sowthistle.

Hand weeding and mulches are always standard weed control methods to fall back on. Chemical controls vary with the turf or ornamental species. For more control information, check the University of California IPM program website: <http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/PMG/selectnewpest.landscape.html>

