

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR The Chronicle

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Suburbia green

One can tell when spring has arrived by the beginning of the annual fight for achieving the perfect lawn. Work has begun earnestly to get rid of the white grub problem, also known as the June beetle. Let's face it, we have created the perfect environment for these insects by creating vast mono-cultural landscapes. In nature, mono-culture does not work. There must be diversity so various species can interact and can support each other in their survival. Planting alien, high-maintenance, shallow-rooted vegetation does not help the situation. The soil needs plants that have deep penetrating roots, thus providing proper ventilation and nutrient circulation.

One should not forget the enormous environmental cost of this kind of landscaping. All the watering, cutting and force-feeding takes a toll on the natural world. By removing grass clippings and replacing them with synthetic fertilizer we are taking away the crucial nutrients from the soil. The microorganisms that are essential to a healthy soil cannot survive on petrol chemical byproducts which fertilizers are made of. They need the natural, slowly decomposing vegetation. In effect, we are putting the lawn on life support. Furthermore, with this practice we are creating an extra burden on already overflowing landfill sights. To make the situation even worse we operate an array of highly inefficient, polluting machinery to beat nature in to obedience.

And, what about us? Can we have a quiet and peaceful weekend before the summer is over and leaf-blower madness begins? Let's cross our fingers!

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