

# Key for Identification of Landscape Turfgrass Diseases

**Monica L. Elliott, Associate Professor, Ft. Lauderdale Research and Education Center, University of Florida, 3205 College Ave, Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33314 and Gary W. Simone, Professor Emeritus Plant Pathology Department, University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida 32611. Revised April 2001**

Florida Cooperative Extension Service/ Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences/ University of Florida/ Christine Waddill, Dean

The following is a general key that may help in making a preliminary diagnosis. Please see the following section for more specific diagnostic characteristics, and information concerning the time of year the disease is most likely to occur.

- A.** Distinct patches of yellow to brown-colored turfgrass are present.
- 1.** Patch areas are less than 3 inches in diameter. Leaf spot lesions present. **Dollar Spot**
  - 2.** Patch areas are greater than 3 inches in diameter. Leaf spot lesions not present.
    - a.** Ring or arc of lush growth or dead grass; mushrooms may be present. **Fairy Ring**
    - b.** No rings or arc of lush growth.
      - i.** Affected areas are distinct circular patches. Leaf pulls out of leaf sheath very easily. **Brown Patch**
      - ii.** Affected areas are irregular patches of 8 to 24 inches diameter or larger with mixture of yellow and dead grass. Roots are short and black. Stolons may be rotted also. **Take-all Root Rot**
- B.** No distinct patches are present.
- 1.** Orange 'spots' present on leaves; 'spots' rub off easily. **Rust**
  - 2.** Orange 'spots' not present on leaves.
    - a.** Leaf spots present.
      - i.** Primarily on bermudagrass and ryegrass. Leaf spots have wide range of sizes. **Helminthosporium' Leaf Spot**
      - ii.** Primarily on St. Augustinegrass in summer. Leaf spots oval to irregular with brown borders and tan to gray centers. **Gray Leaf Spot**
      - iii.** Primarily on St. Augustinegrass in late spring and summer. Narrow, dark brown leaf spots initially, then become oblong, irregular spots with dark tan centers with brown borders **Cercospora Leaf Spot**
      - iv.** Primarily on centipedegrass. Reddish-brown to brown spots surrounded by yellow halo. **Anthracnose**
    - b.** No leaf spots present.
      - i.** Grass covered with an easily removed slimy or crusty growth **Slime Mold**
      - ii.** Grass is chlorotic (yellow) or has mottled leaves associated with general decline **Pythium Root Rot or Nematodes**