

RED THREAD FOUND ON BERMUDA GRASS

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Red thread fungus (Corticium fuciforme (Berk.) Wakef.) was observed in 1965 and 1966 on Bermuda grass (Cynodon dactylon) on lawns in Leland, Mississippi. Red thread is a serious disease on fescues but has not previously been reported on Bermuda grass.

The fungus was isolated and identified from infections on both common and Tifgreen Bermuda. Basidia and basidiospores (Fig. 1D) and clamp connections on hyphae (Fig. 1C) served to identify the fungus from Wakefield's description (2). Pink hyphal threads were found on leaf blades and leaf sheaths during December, January, and February (Fig. 1B).

The first symptoms of infection were pinkish spots from 1 to 2 inches in diameter that appeared in late fall. During December 1965 and January 1966, when soil temperatures were between 4 and 13°C, the spots increased in size until they coalesced into patches as large as 22

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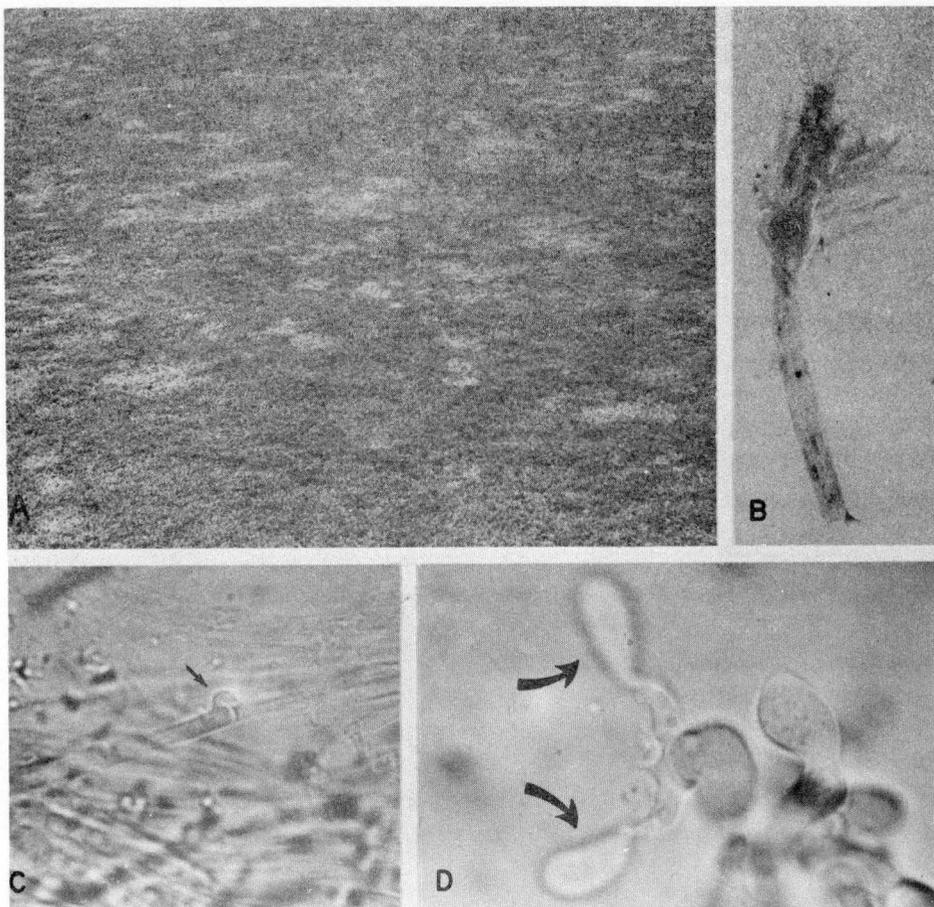


FIGURE 1. The symptoms and signs of red thread on Tifgreen Bermuda. A -- Light-colored patches are diseased. B -- Hyphal threads protruding from grass leaf. C -- Arrow points to clamp connection on hypha taken from a leaf. D -- Arrows point to basidiospores attached to stout, curved sterigmata on a basidium.

inches in diameter (Fig. 1A). After soil temperature dropped to 0°C, the disease was arrested, but the grass in infected spots died.

Sunturf and Tiflawn Bermuda planted in the Leland area did not appear to be infected. The red stromata usually associated with the disease were not as conspicuous on common as on Tifgreen Bermuda. Gould, et al. (1) report that on fescues red thread is most severe when soil nitrogen is inadequate. In the limited number of spots observed, the same appeared to be true for Bermuda grass.

The symptoms on Bermuda are similar to those of "winterkill" for which no pathogen has been identified.

Literature Cited

1. GOULD, C. J., O. C. MALOY, and R. L. GOSS. 1965. Recommendations for turf disease control--Washington. Wash. Agr. Ext. Serv. Ext. Memo 2049.
2. WAKEFIELD, E. M. 1916. Notes on British Theleporaceae. Trans. Brit. Mycol. Soc. 5: 481.

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