## Problem
My lawn is dying. Some bare spots are beginning to show up as well. Help!

## Description (April)
Yellowing and brown patches of grass in my lawn, and some bare spots. The problem appears to be getting worse.

### Questions and Answers

**Question**: When did you first notice a problem with your lawn?
**Answer**: End of February or early March. It seems to be getting worse.

**Question**: Did you have any damage in those areas last summer?
**Answer**: I remember having a couple dry spots, but nothing like this.

**Question**: How often do you water? Do know how many inches of water your lawn receives in a week?
**Answer**: The lawn has an automatic sprinkler system. I water every 2 days for 40 minutes. I’m not sure how many inches that is per week.

**Question**: Have you seen any evidence of insects?
**Answer**: We had a heavy rain last week and I had dozens of weird worms on my sidewalk.

**Questions**: How big were these “worms”?
**Answer**: Maybe an inch. They are very tough things; they pop/crunch if you step on them on the sidewalk.

**Question**: Anything else unusual this year?
**Answer**: Yes. I’ve had a bunch of very large flies in the yard and the house. I have had flocks of starlings in my yard and way more robins than normal. I also have had skunks in my yard almost every night.

### Reference(s)
- [http://whatcom.wsu.edu/cranefly/CFsampling.htm](http://whatcom.wsu.edu/cranefly/CFsampling.htm) Washington State University
- [http://www.ent.orst.edu/urban/e_cranefly.html](http://www.ent.orst.edu/urban/e_cranefly.html) Oregon State University

## Diagnosis
**European crane fly**: There are two species of crane fly larvae that are known to cause damage to turf grass. The larvae feed on shoots, crowns, and roots of turf. Generally, crane flies do not reach large enough numbers to bother healthy, vigorous lawns, but they can occasionally cause problems.

## Recommendations
**Cultural**: 1. Quit watering the lawn in late August or September or let the lawn go dormant in dry months. This will dry out the eggs laid by the adults and reduce numbers of larvae. 2. Natural controls will reduce numbers of larvae below levels likely to cause significant damage. (Plant lawn in sun, remove thatch, aerate, mow regularly, water infrequently but deeply, keep lawn well drained). 3. Begin to monitor your grass for damage in January. Damage reaches its peak in late April as larvae quit eating in May.

**Biological**: Encourage birds to your yard; they eat the larvae. Natural enemy is predaceous ground beetles.

**Chemical**: Consider treatment if you find more than 25 in a square foot of turf. Note: WSU recommends treatment if numbers are 50-80/sf.