

# Fairy Ring



Fairy rings typically appear as rings of dark green and fast-growing turf. They may also appear as rings of slow-growing or killed turf. The bands of affected turf are from 4 inches to a foot in width, forming more or less continuous rings ranging from 3 to 200 feet across. In some instances, the center of a stimulated band may contain weakened or dead grass, or bands may have an inner zone of stimulated grass edged with dead or stunted turf on either side. Fairy rings are produced by colonies of mushroom fungi that live in soil and thatch. These colonies obtain food from decaying organic matter and grow outward radially, increasing in size year after year. The ring of stimulated grass is thought to be caused by nitrogen substances produced by the breakdown of organic matter by the fungi. The fungi usually do not attack grass, but sometimes they repel water, resulting in death of the turf due to drought. When the grass is killed, it may be possible to remove the sod and the top 6 inches of soil and then reseed or re-sod. However, this practice does not always work. Sometimes nothing, not even weeds, will grow in areas killed by fairy rings.

