



A Homeowner's Guide to Controlling Fig Buttercup

Fig Buttercup, or *Ficaria verna*, is a non-native invasive plant that spreads through drainages and waterways unto floodplains. This plant competes with native vegetation - especially spring ephemerals - often forming thick mats on the forest floor or in your lawn.

It is important to stop the spread of *Ficaria verna* in our region; first, by refraining from introducing the plant in our own backyards and second, by combating infestations when they occur. If you find *Ficaria verna* in your lawn or neighborhood, here are our recommendations.

MANUAL CONTROL

Manual control by digging or hand removal is an option only recommended for small infestations of a few isolated plants. Extra care must be taken in both the removal and the disposal process to be effective and to avoid spreading the problem. **For manual removal**, it is critical to get the entire plant, plus all the underground roots, tubers, and bulblets - leaving any part of the plant in the ground will lead to it resprouting the next year. Once removed, **proper disposal is a must**. Bag and secure all plant parts in a plastic bag and dispose directly into garbage bin. Double bagging is even better.

DO NOT TRY TO COMPOST REMOVED PLANTS! Composting does not fully destroy the viability of plant parts and is guaranteed to create a bigger problem by spreading fig buttercup far and wide.

HERBICIDE CONTROL

Herbicides are the preferred and most effective means for controlling and eradicating fig buttercup infestations. Depending upon the location in the landscape, either use a glyphosate-based herbicide or a 3-way broadleaf herbicide. Generally, at least two years of treatments will be required to eradicate a fig buttercup population.

Glyphosate-based herbicides. For environmentally sensitive areas (wet areas, floodplains, streams) we recommend glyphosate herbicides approved for use in wet areas. The addition of a non-ionic surfactant to the mix is also recommended. In landscape beds, standard off-the-shelf glyphosate products found in most garden supply stores can be used. In general, a product with 2.5-3% active ingredient (glyphosate) will be effective in treating fig buttercup. *NOTE: glyphosate is a non-selective herbicide and will damage any desirable non-target plant or grass that is sprayed.*

Broadleaf herbicides. If you're concerned about harming grassy lawns, use a three-way broadleaf herbicide with the active ingredients: 2,4-D, dicamba, and mecoprop (MCP) or MCPA. This type of broadleaf herbicide will not harm or damage grass lawns and can be purchased in any garden supply store.

Timing of Herbicide Treatment. The most optimal time to treat Fig Buttercup with herbicide is after the leaves are fully mature but before they bloom - usually from the end of winter through early spring. In the Piedmont region of NC, this may be between late January and early April, depending on the weather. However, as is the case with many home gardening tasks, sometimes **the best time is when you have the time and are ready to do the job**. *Generally, it takes at least two consecutive years to fully eradicate a *Ficaria verna* Infestation.* Follow up your application with a second sweep the following year!

NOTE: Whenever using an herbicide always read and follow the label directions for safety and application directions. Due to their unique formulations, most ready-to-use herbicide products available at garden centers and hardware stores have restrictions on use near streams and wetlands. The chemical label is the ultimate authority on proper use of the herbicide.



Herbicide Product Brand Recommendations

Below are a few examples of Ready-to-use commercially available herbicide products for fig buttercup control. In addition, Clemson’s Cooperative Extension Home & Garden Information Center provides a more extensive resource for recommended herbicide products – see website resources below.

NOTE: products listed below are not an extensive list and are only intended to provide examples of types of products available to homeowners.

BEST recommendation for environmentally sensitive areas.

Aquatic-approved glyphosate products may be purchased at farm supply stores or online suppliers. There are some ready-to-use formulations, but these may be hard to find. Otherwise, purchase glyphosate concentrate (typically 53%) approved for wetland use and dilute to a 3% mix.

Products such as:

- Rodeo
- Roundup Custom for Aquatic & Terrestrial Use
- Aquaneat Aquatic
- Farmworks Aquatic

Recommendations if no concern for lawn damage.

Ready-to-use, off the shelf glyphosate products (generally 2% active ingredient) such as:

- Ortho GroundClear Vegetation Killer (Ready-to-Spray)
- Hi-Yield Killzall Quick RTU
- Roundup Ready-To-Use Weed & Grass Killer

Broadleaf Recommendations for lawns (does not harm grasses).

Concentrate or Ready-to-use, off the shelf products (generally marketed as “Trimec”) such as:

- Ferti-lome Weed-Out Lawn Weed Killer – Contains Trimec®
- Southern Ag Lawn Weed Killer with Trimec®
- Spectracide Weed Stop Weed Killer for Lawns
- Bonide Weed Beater Lawn Weed Killer
- Ortho Weed B Gon Weed Killer for Lawns

WEBSITE RESOURCES (for more information about fig buttercup)

NC Invasive Plant Council: [NC- IPC Fig Buttercup Project](#)

Clemson Cooperative Extension: [Home & Garden Center - Fig Buttercup](#)

