



UWA Turf Research Newsletter

Number 3 Volume 12 September 2014

THE UNIVERSITY OF
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Welcome to August, this winter's rainfall at the UWA Turf Research Facility was on par with 2013. Over the past 3 months we have received 314 mm, which is slightly less than last year's 320 mm. Our time indoors has been spent catching up on work in the laboratory, reviewing our data and preparing the irrigator (and ourselves!) for the forthcoming irrigation season.

Soil Amendment Project: Update

This project is comparing the effectiveness of a range of soil amendments to increase the water holding capacity of our sandy soils. The main aim of the project is to evaluate whether soil amendments can decrease the irrigation requirements of turfgrass.

The winter exemplified that soft-leaf buffalograss is indeed a warm season grass that goes dormant in winter. As a consequence there has been very little growth since May, with areas that browned-off during autumn still visible.

Over the winter we focussed on further determining the physical characteristics of the soil amendments included in the study. Measurements were done in the applied soil physics laboratory of Dr Cameron Grant at the University of Adelaide and included soil water retention curves, saturated hydraulic conductivity, and soil penetration resistance.



Gaus Azam determining soil penetration resistance of one of the samples.

Water Allocation Project: Update

This project is comparing the effectiveness of three water allocations (5000, 6250 or 7500 kL ha⁻¹ per year) to maintain turfgrass growth and quality.

This winter we noticed something new. Couch was beginning to out compete the kikuyu in the plots that had only received an annual water allocation of 5000 kL water per hectare over the past two years. You will recall that the plots were established from turfgrass harvested from the City of Belmont's Selby Park, which at the time was dominated by kikuyu. What a difference time and limited water supplies make!

We were curious to understand what these observations meant for Industry, so hosted an informal Open Day on 13 August to get feedback from turfgrass managers.

Ken Johnston (Sports Turf Technology), Helen Gigney (Water Corporation) and Tony Kelly (City of Subiaco) at the Winter Open



UWA Turf Industries Research Steering Committee

Our vibrant committee, chaired by Warren Stephens (City of Belmont), includes representatives from various Associations, businesses and Government authorities who have an interest in turfgrass production and maintenance. The role of the committee is to identify research needs, assist with raising funds and inform their respective Associations/colleagues of the Committees activities. The success of our 15+ year program is in part due to our enthusiastic Steering Committee. For a complete list of committee members visit our website <http://www.plants.uwa.edu.au/research/turf>.

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