There are many answers to the question, “What is a weed?” but perhaps the most specific was offered by R.J. Aldrich: “A weed is a plant that originated in a natural environment and, in the natural growing environment, exists in a way that hinders the horticultural objective.”

When applied to golf courses, the definition offered by Aldrich is a useful way to think about the complex nature of weeds in a managed turf environment. Weeds are more than just plants that grow where they are not wanted; they can also be considered as plants that are adapted to the conditions of the turf but have a detrimental effect on the overall quality of the turfgrass.

Successful weed-control strategies need to address both the natural growing environment and imposed maintenance practices. This means considering not only what plants are growing in the turf but also how they are maintained. For example, regular mowing and watering can create conditions that favor certain weeds, while others may be favored by less frequent maintenance.

In golf course management, strategies to control weeds include cultural practices such as proper nutrition, irrigation, and aeration, as well as chemical and mechanical methods. It is important to balance these approaches to achieve the desired turf quality without creating environmental problems.

As the dog days of summer come to an end, remember to consider adjusting bunker sand depth. Maintaining proper sand depth has a profound impact on the playability and performance of bunkers. Fortunately, creative techniques can be used to improve efficiency and uniformity when adjusting bunker sand depth.

When is the last time you checked the depth of the sand in your bunkers?