

Monocot weeds

Because of natural variations within grasses and differences that occur under varying environments, the illustrations included herein are meant to be representative but not definitive. Users need to consider all of the information—seed-head, in-bud, ligule, collar, descriptive text, tips and distribution—to accurately identify a weed.

As you proceed, keep in mind that you should not rely on an individual characteristic to be conclusive, rather total the number of similar characteristics between the sample and the guide to help narrow the number of possibilities.

The monocot weed species illustrated herein were selected for their likelihood of appearing in turf and their latest reported distribution.

Identifying a monocot weed

Once a mature sample has been selected, check each of the listed plant parts as follows:

- seedhead—size, shape, openness and number, size and shape of branches and seeds
- in-bud—cut through a leaf stem and determine if it is folded or rolled
- ligule—remove a leaf from its stem and with a hand lens check the size, shape and texture
- collar—lay the leaf flat, underside up and check the size, shape and top and bottom edges
- tips—check for additional vegetative plant characteristics
- distribution—confirm that this weed species has been identified in your state

ANNUAL BLUEGRASS

aka *Poa annua*, *poa*

DIAGNOSTIC TIPS:

Very persistent self-seeding winter annual or biennial

Short, narrow leaf blades with parallel edges and boat-shaped tip

Some leaf blades wavy

Germinates in late summer/early fall

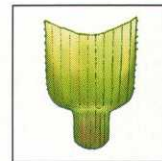
Shallow-rooted, dying under heat or moisture stress



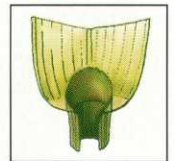
STRUCTURAL CHARACTERISTICS:



Leaf in bud:
folded



Collar:
narrow
top pinched



Ligule:
medium
pointed

DISTRIBUTION:



■ *Indigenous states*

MONOCOTS *Annual*

SANDBUR

DIAGNOSTIC TIPS:

A mostly prostrate, narrow-leaved summer annual that likes sandy soils

Distinctive yellow seedhead contains 6-20 large, sharply-burred seeds

Burred seeds can cause painful injury to unprotected feet or ankles



STRUCTURAL CHARACTERISTICS:



Leaf in bud:
folded



Collar:
broad
bottom pinched



Ligule:
hairy

DISTRIBUTION:



 *Indigenous states*

FOXTAIL BARLEY aka *squirreltail barley*

DIAGNOSTIC TIPS:

A narrow-leaved prostrate summer annual

Leaf blades coarse to touch, often with sparse, stiff hairs

Seedhead is a single tufted spike

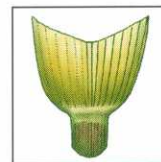
Seed has a 2-3-inch-long hair at pointed end



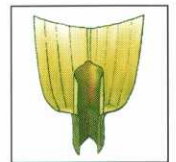
STRUCTURAL CHARACTERISTICS:



Leaf in bud:
folded



Collar:
broad
bottom pinched



Ligule:
tall
toothed

DISTRIBUTION:



 *Indigenous states*

MONOCOTS *Annual*

GOOSEGRASS aka *silver crabgrass*

A narrow-leaved
dense prostrate
summer annual

Leaf color is
darker green
than most annu-
al monocots

Collar area has
sparse long hairs

Seedhead has 2-13
branches which are white
to silver in color



BARNYARDGRASS aka *billion dollargrass,* *watergrass*

A very wide-bladed semi-
prostrate
summer annual

Stems may be branched
at nodes and frequently
bent upright

Seedhead has multiple
short perpendicular
branches

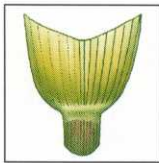
Seeds are coarse with short
burrs



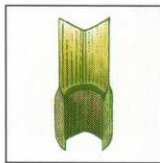
STRUCTURAL CHARACTERISTICS:



Leaf in bud:
folded

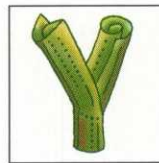


Collar:
broad
continuous

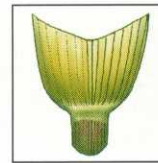


Ligule:
short
toothed & divided

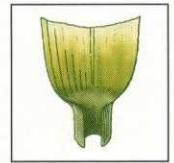
STRUCTURAL CHARACTERISTICS:



Leaf in bud:
rolled



Collar width:
broad



Ligule height:
absent

DISTRIBUTION:



■ *Indigenous states*

DISTRIBUTION:



■ *Indigenous states*

MONOCOTS *Annual*

CHEATGRASS

aka *chess*, *rye bromegrass*

A narrow-leaved, mostly erect winter annual

Underside of leaf is often hairy

Seedhead is open with multiple semi-erect branches carrying 1-4 seed clusters

Seeds look like cultivated wheat or rye



GREEN FOXTAIL

aka *green bristlegrass*

A wide-leaved mounded summer annual

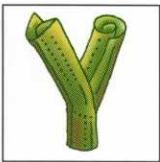
Leaf blades are limp, bright green and sharply pointed

Stems bent upright at nodes

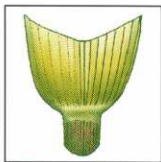
Seedhead cylindrical with tufted pale green seeds



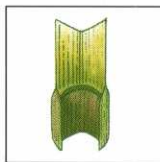
STRUCTURAL CHARACTERISTICS:



Leaf in bud:
rolled

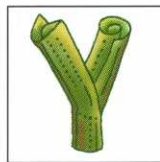


Collar:
broad
bottom pinched

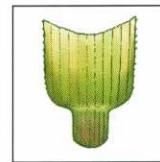


Ligule:
short
toothed

STRUCTURAL CHARACTERISTICS:



Leaf in bud:
rolled



Collar:
narrow
continuous



Ligule:
hairy

DISTRIBUTION:



Indigenous states

DISTRIBUTION:



Indigenous states

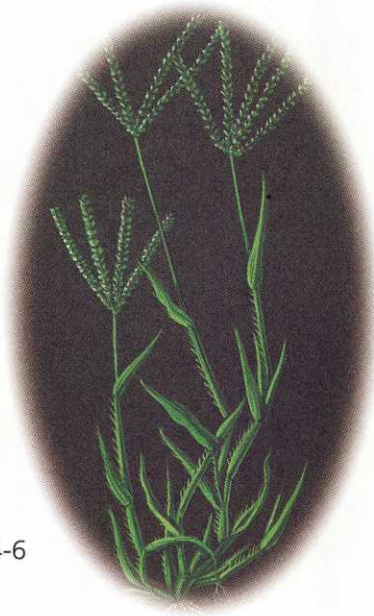
LARGE CRABGRASS aka *hairy fingergrass*

A wide-bladed prostrate summer annual

Leaves are hairy on both surfaces with a prominent midrib

Older nodes are often branched and rooted where contacting soil

Seedhead open with 4-6 slender branches



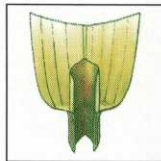
STRUCTURAL CHARACTERISTICS:



Leaf in bud:
rolled



Collar:
broad
top pinched



Ligule:
tall
toothed & pointed

DISTRIBUTION:



Indigenous states

RESCUEGRASS aka *prairiegrass, rescue brome*

A wide-leaved winter annual or biennial

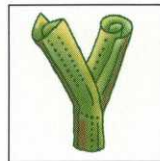
Leaves are hairy at edges and on upper surface

Seedhead is open with bending slender side branches

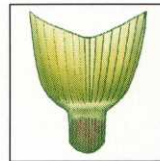
Seed clusters look like cultivated wheat or rye



STRUCTURAL CHARACTERISTICS:



Leaf in bud:
rolled



Collar:
broad
bottom pinched



Ligule:
tall
toothed & pointed

DISTRIBUTION:



Indigenous states

MONOCOTS *Annual*

SMOOTH CRABGRASS aka *fingergrass*

A narrow-leaved prostrate summer annual

Leaves are not hairy except sparsely haired in collar area

Stems branch at nodes, but do not root

Seedhead has 2-6 slender upright branches



STINKGRASS

A narrow-leaved annual

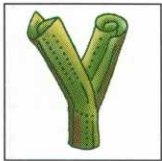
Leaves are dull on upper surface and glossy on underside

Collar area has sparse long hairs

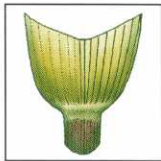
Plant has a very disagreeable odor when cut or damaged



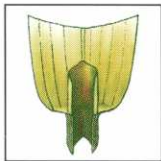
STRUCTURAL CHARACTERISTICS:



Leaf in bud:
rolled

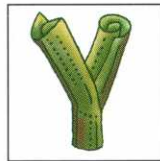


Collar:
broad
bottom pinched

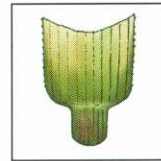


Ligule:
tall
rounded

STRUCTURAL CHARACTERISTICS:



Leaf in bud:
rolled



Collar:
narrow
continuous



Ligule:
hairy

DISTRIBUTION:



■ *Indigenous states*

DISTRIBUTION:



■ *Indigenous states*

MONOCOTS *Annual*

WITCHGRASS

An erect wide-bladed summer annual

Leaves are densely haired on both surfaces

Emerging seedhead is fountainlike

Mature seedhead is large and very open with slender branches carrying single seeds

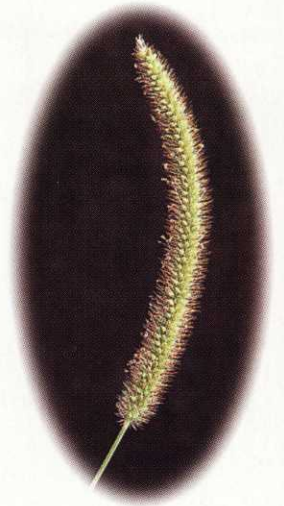


YELLOW FOXTAIL

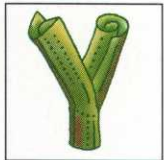
An erect wide-bladed summer annual

Upper leaf surface has long hairs in collar area

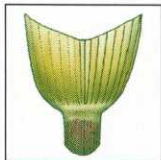
Leaves are often slightly twisted in an open spiral



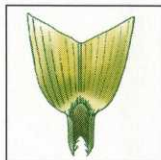
STRUCTURAL CHARACTERISTICS:



Leaf in bud:
rolled

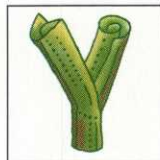


Collar:
broad
continuous

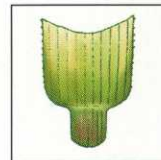


Ligule:
hairy

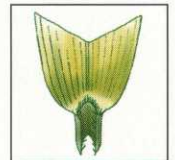
STRUCTURAL CHARACTERISTICS:



Leaf in bud:
rolled



Collar:
narrow
top pinched



Ligule:
hairy

DISTRIBUTION:



 *Indigenous states*

DISTRIBUTION:



 *Indigenous states*

MONOCOTS *Annual*

DOWNY BROME

aka *drooping bromegrass*

An erect narrow-bladed winter annual

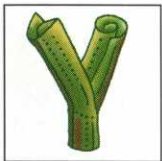
Leaves have dense soft hairs on both surfaces

Seedhead is open with drooping branches

Seed clusters are tufted and look like cultivated wheat or rye



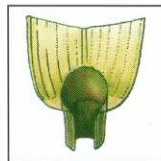
STRUCTURAL CHARACTERISTICS:



Leaf in bud:
rolled



Collar:
narrow
bottom pinched



Ligule:
medium
toothed & pointed

DISTRIBUTION:



■ *Indigenous states*

FALL PANICUM

aka *smooth witchgrass*

A very wide-bladed mostly prostrate summer annual

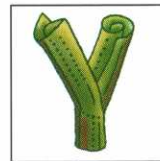
Leaves may be hairy on upper surface, are glossy beneath and sharply pointed

Stems branched at nodes and bent upright

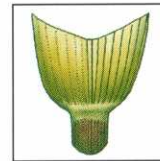
Seedhead is open with multiple very slender branches



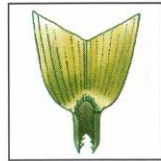
STRUCTURAL CHARACTERISTICS:



Leaf in bud:
rolled

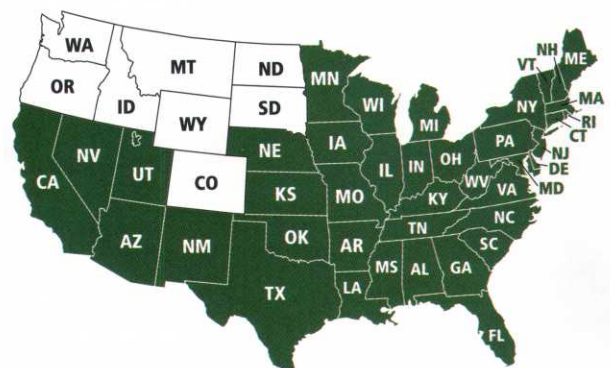


Collar:
broad
continuous



Ligule height:
hairy

DISTRIBUTION:



■ *Indigenous states*

