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—seedhead, inbud, 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 selfseeding 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



SANDBUR

DIAGNOSTIC TIPS:

A mostly prostrate, narrow-leafed 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



Ligule:

hairy

Collar: broad bottom pinched

DISTRIBUTION:



FOXTAIL BARLEY aka squirreltail barley

DIAGNOSTIC TIPS: A narrow-leafed 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



GOOSEGRASS aka silver crabgrass

A narrow-leafed dense prostrate summer annual

Leaf color is darker green than most annual monocots

Collar area has sparse long hairs

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

STRUCTURAL CHARACTERISTICS:



Leaf in bud: folded



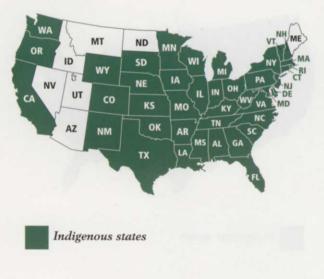
Ligule:

short

toothed & divided

Collar: broad continuous

DISTRIBUTION:



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:



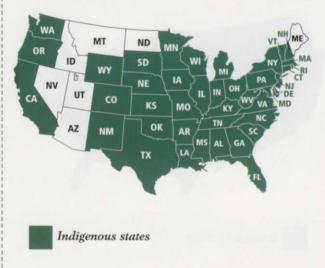






Ligule height: absent

DISTRIBUTION:





CHEATGRASS

aka chess, rye bromegrass

A narrow-leafed, 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 rve



Ligule:

short

toothed

GREEN FOXTAIL aka green bristlegrass

A wide-leafed 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

DISTRIBUTION:



STRUCTURAL CHARACTERISTICS:







hairy

Leaf in bud:

Collar: narrow continuous

DISTRIBUTION:



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



Ligule:

tall

toothed & pointed

Collar: broad top pinched

DISTRIBUTION:



RESCUEGRASS aka prairiegrass, rescue brome

A wide-leafed 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:







Collar: broad bottom pinched *Ligule:* tall toothed & pointed

DISTRIBUTION:



SMOOTH CRABGRASS

aka fingergrass

A narrow-leafed 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



Ligule:

tall

rounded

STRUCTURAL CHARACTERISTICS:



Leaf in bud: rolled



Collar: broad bottom pinched

DISTRIBUTION:



STINKGRASS

A narrow-leafed 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:







Ligule: hairy

Leaf in bud: rolled

Collar: narrow continuous



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

Ligule:

hairy

STRUCTURAL CHARACTERISTICS:



Leaf in bud: rolled



Collar: broad continuous

DISTRIBUTION:





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:







Ligule: hairy

Leaf in bud: rolled

Collar: narrow top pinched



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 rve



Ligule:

medium

toothed & pointed

STRUCTURAL CHARACTERISTICS:

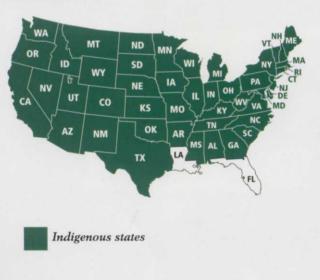


Leaf in bud: rolled



Collar: narrow bottom pinched

DISTRIBUTION:



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:



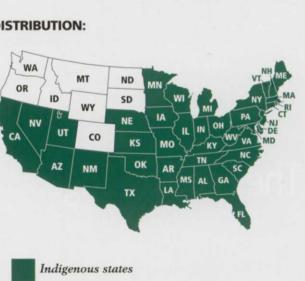


Collar: broad continuous

Ligule height:

hairy

DISTRIBUTION:



wild oats

An erect wide-bladed annual

Plant often turns brown in summer as seed matures

Collar area has sparse short hairs

Stems are stiff

Seedhead is open with multiple branches carrying many single drooping seeds

STRUCTURAL CHARACTERISTICS:



Leaf in bud: rolled



Collar: narrow bottom pinched

DISTRIBUTION:





Ligule:

tall

toothed

SOUTHERN CRABGRASS

aka *summergrass*

A wide-bladed prostrate summer annual

Leaves may be hairy on upper surface

Stems will root at nodes

Collar area has sparse long hairs

Seedhead has 2-9 slender branches

STRUCTURAL CHARACTERISTICS:



rolled



Collar:

broad



Ligule: medium toothed & pointed

