

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

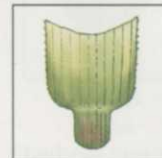
Shallow-rooted, dying under heat or moisture stress



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



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:
hairy

STRUCTURAL CHARACTERISTICS:



Leaf in bud:
folded



Collar:
broad
bottom pinched



Ligule:
tall
toothed

DISTRIBUTION:



■ Indigenous states

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



STRUCTURAL CHARACTERISTICS:



Leaf in bud:
folded



Collar:
broad
continuous



Ligule:
short
toothed & divided

DISTRIBUTION:



Indigenous states

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:
rolled



Collar width:
broad



Ligule height:
absent

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

DISTRIBUTION:



Indigenous states

STRUCTURAL CHARACTERISTICS:



Leaf in bud:
rolled



Collar:
narrow
continuous



Ligule:
hairy

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



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
top pinched



Ligule:
tall
toothed & pointed

STRUCTURAL CHARACTERISTICS:



Leaf in bud:
rolled



Collar:
broad
bottom pinched



Ligule:
tall
toothed & pointed

DISTRIBUTION:



Indigenous states

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

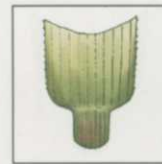


Ligule:
tall
rounded

STRUCTURAL CHARACTERISTICS:



Leaf in bud:
rolled



Collar:
narrow
continuous



Ligule:
hairy

DISTRIBUTION:



Indigenous states

DISTRIBUTION:



Indigenous states

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

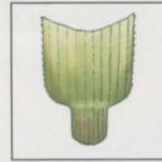


Ligule:
hairy

STRUCTURAL CHARACTERISTICS:



Leaf in bud:
rolled



Collar:
narrow
top pinched



Ligule:
hairy

DISTRIBUTION:



■ *Indigenous states*

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■ *Indigenous states*

MONOCOTS *Annual*

DOWNY BROME

aka *drooping brome*grass

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



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:
narrow
bottom pinched



Ligule:
medium
toothed & pointed

STRUCTURAL CHARACTERISTICS:



Leaf in bud:
rolled



Collar:
broad
continuous



Ligule height:
hairy

DISTRIBUTION:



■ *Indigenous states*

DISTRIBUTION:



■ *Indigenous states*

WILD OAT aka *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



Ligule:
tall
toothed

DISTRIBUTION:



■ *Indigenous states*

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:



Leaf in bud:
rolled

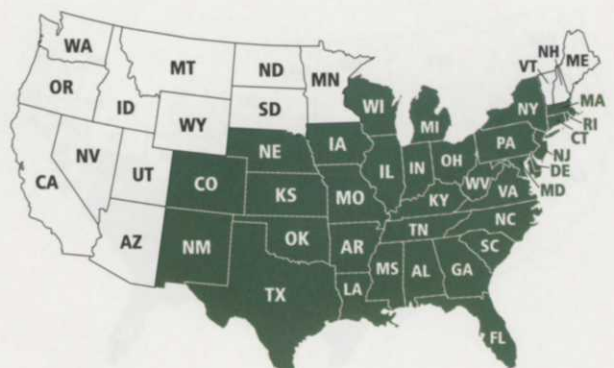


Collar:
broad



Ligule:
medium
toothed & pointed

DISTRIBUTION:



■ *Indigenous states*