

VEGETATIVE GRASS WEED IDENTIFICATION KEY

Kurt Hembree, UCCE, Fresno County

Ligule absent

Leaves green throughout - *Echinochloa crus-galli* (barnyardgrass)

Leaves with purple cross-stripping on leaves - *Echinochloa crus-galli* (Junglerice)

Ligule present

Leaf folded in bud

Scientific name	Common name	Life cycle	Ligule	Ligule Length (mm)	Auricles	Hairs
<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>	Orchardgrass	P	Membrane	2-5	No	No
<i>Eleusine indica</i>	Goosegrass	A	Membrane	0.6-1	No	Collar & top of sheath
<i>Eleusine tristachya</i>	Perennial goosegrass	P	Ciliate above, membrane below	0.5	No	No
<i>Lolium perenne</i>	Perennial ryegrass	P	Membrane	0.4-0.6	Yes, small	No
<i>Pennisetum clandestinum</i>	Kikuyugrass	P	Ciliate	1.5	No	Blade & sheath
<i>Poa annua</i>	Annual bluegrass	A	Membrane	1-2	No	No

Leaf rolled in bud

Ligule ciliate

Scientific name	Common name	Life cycle	Ligule Length (mm)	Auricles	Hairs	Misc.
<i>Chloris virgata</i>	Feather fingergrass	A	0.25	No	No	Ligule ciliate above, membranous below
<i>Cynodon dactylon</i>	Bermudagrass	P	2-3	No	Sparse on sheath	Stolons well developed
<i>Eragrostis cilianensis</i>	Stinkgrass	A	0.4-1	No	Top of sheath	
<i>Eriochloa contracta</i>	Prairie cupgrass	A	1	No	Dense short soft hairs on sheath and blade	Blade <5mm wide
<i>Panicum capillare</i>	Witchgrass	A	1	No	Blade and sheath	Hairs long, stiff, at 90° angle to stem
<i>Setaria pumila</i> = (<i>S. lutescens</i>)	Yellow foxtail	A	1	No	Long at base of blade	Stem flattened, sheath keeled
<i>Setaria viridis</i>	Green foxtail	A	0.8-1	No	Margin of sheath	
<i>Sorghum halepense</i>	Johnsongrass	P	3-6	No	No	Ligule ciliate above, membranous below

Ligule membranous
Sheath closed more than half its length

Scientific name	Common name	Life cycle	Ligule Length (mm)	Auricles	Hairs
<i>Aegilops cylindrica</i>	Jointed goatgrass	A	0.25	Usually evident	Sheath and blade margin
<i>Aegilops triuncialis</i>	Barb goatgrass	A	0.5	Usually evident	Mid to upper sheath and blade edge, long hairs to 2 mm
<i>Bromus catharticus</i> = (<i>B. willdenowii</i>)	Rescuegrass	A	3-6	No	Short hairs on sheath, occasionally glabrous, blade sometimes hairy
<i>Bromus diandrus</i>	Ripgut brome	A	3-5	No	Sheath and blade with long soft hairs, ciliate hairs on leaf margin
<i>Bromus hordeaceus</i> = (<i>B. mollis</i>)	Soft brome	A	1.2-1.7	No	Long hairs on sheath and blade
<i>Bromus inermis</i>	Smooth brome	P	<1	Yes	Usually no, sometimes with short hairs on blade
<i>Bromus madritensis</i> ssp. <i>rubins</i>	Red brome	A	0.8-1.2	No	Short soft hairs on sheath and blade
<i>Bromus secalinus</i>	Cheat	A	1.2-2.5	No	Short hairs on blade, sheath lack hairs or only at base
<i>Bromus tectorum</i>	Downy brome or Cheatgrass	A	1.5-3	No	Short hairs throughout, long hairs at blade base and top of sheath
<i>Polypogon monspeliensis</i>	Rabbitfoot grass	A	5-6	No	No

Sheath open at least half its length
Auricles present

Scientific name	Common name	Life cycle	Ligule Length (mm)	Auricle features	Hairs	Misc. features
<i>Aegilops cylindrica</i>	Jointed goatgrass	A	0.25	Short, rounded with hairs along margin	Sheath and blade margin	Closed sheath at base, can tear to appear open, auricles often present
<i>Aegilops triuncialis</i>	Barb goatgrass	A	0.5	Short, rounded with hairs along margin	Mid to upper sheath and blade edge, long hairs to 2 mm	Closed sheath at base, can tear to appear open, auricles often present
<i>Elytrigia repens</i>	Quackgrass	P	0.2-0.4	Short	Short hairs on sheath and blade	
<i>Festuca arundinacea</i>	Tall fescue	P	1.2	Short with hairs	Occasionally hairs on collar	Wide, shiny leaves (4-10 mm)
<i>Hordeum murinum</i> ssp. <i>leporinum</i> = (<i>H. leporinum</i>)	Hare barley	A	1-2	Long, wraps around stem	Primarily on lower blade surface and sheath	
<i>Lolium multiflorum</i>	Italian ryegrass	A	1-2	Short	No	Narrow, shiny leaves (<4 mm)
<i>Taeniatherum caput-medusae</i>	Medusahead	A	0.5	Short	Blade and blade margin	Narrow leaves

Auricles absent

No hairs on sheath and/or blade

Scientific name	Common name	Life cycle	Ligule Length (mm)	Misc. features
<i>Alopecurus pratensis</i>	Meadow foxtail	P	1-3	Ligule flat at top
<i>Ammophila arenaria</i>	European beachgrass	P	1-3	Well developed rhizomes, blades stiff and rolled
<i>Avena barbata</i>	Slender wild oat	A	0.5-1	Ligule flat and shaggy on top
<i>Chloris virgata</i>	Feather fingergrass	A	0.25	Ligule ciliate above, membranous below
<i>Leptochloa fascicularis</i>	Bearded sprangletop	A	1	Ligule acute and fringed at top
<i>Lolium multiflorum</i>	Italian ryegrass	A	0.5-3	Short auricles often present
<i>Phalaris aquatica</i>	Harding grass	P	5	Bunchgrass
<i>Phalaris minor</i>	Littleseed canarygrass	A	5	
<i>Sorghum halepense</i>	Johnsongrass	P	3-6	Ligule ciliate above, membranous below

Hairs on sheath and/or blade

Scientific name	Common name	Life cycle	Ligule Length (mm)	Hairs	Misc. features
<i>Aegilops cylindrica</i>	Jointed goatgrass	A	0.25	Sheath and blade margin	Closed sheath at base, can tear to appear open, auricles often present
<i>Aegilops triuncialis</i>	Barb goatgrass	A	0.5	Mid to upper sheath and blade edge, long hairs to 2 mm	Closed sheath at base, can tear to appear open, auricles often present
<i>Avena fatua</i>	Wild oat	A	3-5.5	At base of blade and margin	Sheath rounded
<i>Digitaria ischaemum</i>	Smooth crabgrass	A	1.5-3	Sparse on blade	Sheath flattened
<i>Digitaria sanguinalis</i>	Large crabgrass	A	1-2	Sheath and blade with long stiff hairs at 90° angle	Sheath flattened
<i>Holcus lanatus</i>	Common velvetgrass	P	1.5-3	Very hairy on blade and sheath, hairs long and soft	Sheath flattened
<i>Hordeum jubatum</i>	Foxtail barley	P	0.6	Base of blade and top of sheath	Sheath flattened
<i>Paspalum dilatatum</i>	Dallisgrass	P	5	Base of blade and margin	Sheath flattened
<i>Paspalum distichum</i>	Knotgrass	P	1	Blade, sheath, and sheath margin	Adult plants glabrous with long hairs on collar only
<i>Vulpia myuros</i>	Rattail fescue	A	0.2-0.4	Short hairs on upper leaf surface	Leaves thin and delicate

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