

Invasive Annual Grass Identification Guide

Invasive annual grasses are significant drivers of declining ecological function and habitat degradation across the western U.S. These grasses increase wildfire risk, impact forage availability to grazing operations and affect wildlife populations dependent on healthy rangelands. Being able to identify these species on the landscape or in a pasture is the first step in their control and rangeland restoration.



Cheatgrass (*Bromus tectorum*)

Also known as downy brome, this is the most abundant of the invasive annual grasses, covering an estimated 50-70 million acres in the western U.S. Cheatgrass grows from 6—24" tall depending on moisture. The seedlings are green and the plant remains green until seed set when it turns red-brown as it dries out and completes its lifecycle. The leaves are typically 1/2" wide and covered in soft hairs. The seedheads nod, hanging below the main stem.

Japanese Brome (*Bromus japonicus*)

Japanese brome is nearly identical to cheatgrass, but has a more robust, elongated tear-shaped seedhead with shorter awns. Japanese brome is the most geographically widespread of the invasive annual grasses, ranging from the west coast through the Great Plains and into the Midwest.



Ventenata (*Ventenata dubia*)

During the growing season ventenata can be identified by the dark red or black nodes on the stem. It also has a long, membranous ligule when you pull the leaf away from the stem. The seedhead is an open panicle and the seeds have bent and twisted awns. Ventenata can look very similar to the native tufted hairgrass (*Deschampsia cespitosa*), so it is important to contact your local county weed manager to confirm species identification if in doubt.





Medusahead (*Taeniatherum caput-medusae*)

Medusahead is typically 6-24" tall with a distinct bristly seedhead which gives the plant its name. The seedhead has very long awns that spread and twist. During the growing season stands of this grass have a distinct yellow-green sheen that can be recognized at a distance. Other native species that may appear similar include bottlebrush squirreltail (*Elymus elymoides*) and foxtail barley (*Hordeum jubatum*).

Invasive Annual Grass Control with Rejuvra Herbicide

Invasive annual grasses are widespread but new technology now allows land managers to get ahead of annual grass invasion and reclaim their rangeland. Rejuvra Herbicide offers up to four years of control for species like cheatgrass, Japanese brome, ventenata and medusahead. This long lasting soil residual controls the seeds of these species in the seedbank, releasing native perennial vegetation and allowing land managers to achieve long term success. Rejuvra is used at low application rates to minimize how much active ingredient is put into the environment. Find out more about Rejuvra Herbicide at the Envu Range & Pasture website at us.envu.com.

