

## Common Arable Grass weeds and how to identify them

Photos taken by ADAS unless where otherwise stated

### Black-grass (*Alopecurus myosuroides*)



- Typically 20-80cm tall (heads will tend to extend just above the crop canopy).
- Hairless leaves are flat and a grey-green colour.
- Slender erect stems with few nodes.
- Seed heads are narrow and cylindrical. Initially green then matures into dark purple/black colour.
- Ligule (circled) blunt and finely serrated. No auricle
- Mainly Autumn germinating (Sep-Nov) and Summer seed shed (June-Aug)

### Italian ryegrass (*Lolium multiflorum*)



- Typically 30-100 cm in height
- Glossy dark green leaves
- Densely tufted growth habit
- Flattened seed head with spikelets arranged alternately on either side of the central stem
- Awned spikelets (long hair-like structures)
- Small auricles, with typically pointed and blunt ligule (circled)
- Germination mainly in Autumn and Spring (Sep-Nov, Mar-May) and summer seed shed (Jul-Sep)

## Wild-oats (*Avena sp.*)



- Typically 30-180cm
- Broad, flat rough leaves with a anticlockwise twist when viewed from above.
- Leaf margins hairy.
- Large, open, drooping seedhead.
- No auricles and long ligule finely serrated.
- Germinates mainly in Spring (Mar-Apr) but is a less common winter variety that germinates mainly in Autumn (Sep-Nov).

## Sterile and Great Brome (*Anisantha sterilis*, *Anisantha diandra*)



- Typically flat thin leaves, finely pointed and hairy (great brome more so)
- Tussock-forming growth habit
- Characteristically 'droopy' flower heads when mature
- Open wedge shaped spikelets with long spreading awns
- Both very similar but spikelet length of great brome is longer (70-90mm vs 40-60mm) and plants generally larger.
- Germination mainly in Autumn (Aug-Nov), seed shed (Jun-Aug)

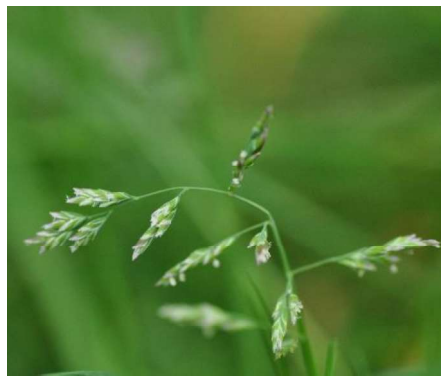
## Meadow, Rye and Soft Brome

(*Bromus commutatus*, *Bromus secalinus*,  
*Bromus hordeaceus*)



- Typically flat thin leaves, finely pointed and hairy (great brome more so).
- Tussock-forming growth habit
- Characteristically 'droopy' flower heads when mature.
- Open wedge shaped spikelets with long spreading awns.
- Both very similar but spikelet length of great brome is longer (70-90mm vs 40-60mm) and plants generally larger.
- Germination mainly in Autumn (Aug-Nov), seed shed (Jun-Aug).

**Annual meadow grass (*Poa annua*)**



- Branched and spreading flowering head (pyramid shaped).
- Spikelets small and awn-less.
- Leaves light green and often crinkled/puckered – grow horizontally from a central point.
- Medium ligule (up to 5mm) and rounded (circled).
- More low growing and compact than other arable annual grasses.
- Can overwinter so plants found at nearly all growth stages year-round.

## Rats-tail fescue (*Vulpia myuros*)

Photo credits : Dr Lucie Buchie, Natural Resources Institute of the University of Greenwich



- Panicles often tinged purple when mature, usually curved and one-sided.
- Long fine leaves (~2mm in width) with a rolled shape, often appearing wiry.
- Slender plant that often grows in loose clumps.
- Stems generally unbranched.
- The lower part of the panicle often stays hidden inside the top leaf sheath (unlike most other grasses).