

Quackgrass

Elymus repens

Description

It was introduced to the United States as a contaminant in hay or straw.

Habit

Cool season, perennial grass that grows 2 feet or more laterally from the main shoot before sending aerial stems, and can grow as deep as 8 inches.

Leaves

1/4 - 1/2 inch wide, flat, pointed, and has small auricles at the junction of blade and sheath.

Blades are sparsely hairy above and hairless below.

Stems

Erect and usually 1-3 feet tall.

Flowers



Franco Giordana



James K. Lindsey



Spikelets are arranged in two long rows and born flat-wise to the stem. Florets are awnless to short-awned.

Fruits and Seeds

Seeds are elliptical, pale yellow to brown. Each stem can produce up to 400 seeds, although 20-40 is common. Seeds may remain dormant in the soil for 2-3 years.

Habitat

Native to Europe, Northern Africa, and temperate Asia to India. Found in disturbed areas, riverbanks, fields, pastures, waste areas, mixed-grass prairies and open woodlands. Can also invade gardens, yards, crop fields, roadsides, ditches, and other disturbed, moist areas.

Reproduction

By seed and extensively creeping rhizomes.

Similar

Can be distinguished from many other grasses by its prominent pale yellow or straw-colored rhizomes with a tough brownish sheath at each joint. The sheathed joints give the rhizomes a scaly appearance.

Monitoring and Rapid Response

Till in spring and fall if possible; use control burns with approved burn plan. Can be effectively controlled using any of several readily available general use herbicides such as glyphosate in the spring or fall.

Credits

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