

Slender False-brome

*Brachypodium
sylvaticum*

Slender false-brome is a perennial grass species native to Europe, Asia, and North Africa. The species has exceptionally wide distribution, occupying forested and open areas at a variety of aspects and elevations (Figure 3, back page). Populations are known in riparian forests as well as in upland hardwood and conifer forests under patchy and closed canopies at elevations of 200 to 3,500 feet. Vigorous populations also occupy forest edges and upland prairies in full sun. Wildlife find false-brome quite unpalatable. Also, it may inhibit tree seedling establishment and displace threatened and endangered plant species.



Figure 1.—Slender false-brome has hairy leaf margins and lower stems. Photo: Glenn Miller, Oregon Department of Agriculture.

Description

Slender false-brome can be distinguished from most other grasses by its hairy leaf margins and lower stems (Figure 1). It has broad leaves (up to 0.5 inch wide) that are lax and a long-lasting, bright green. The flower spikes droop noticeably. False-brome tends to form large clumps or bunches but apparently is not rhizomatous. Slender false-brome reproduces rapidly from seed and can resprout from small stem or root fragments when cut. It does not appear that seeds remain in the seed bank longer than 1 year.

Management options

Cultural, chemical, and mechanical methods are available for managing slender false-brome. For this reason, it's best to use an integrated weed management plan, including tactics to prevent the spread of slender false-brome outside infested areas. For example, when driving, walking, or moving livestock through infested areas, clean clothing, vehicles, and animals to remove any seeds before continuing on into uninfested areas.

Prevention

Slender false-brome seed seems to disperse on boots, clothing, and tires of forest workers and visitors. It is not coincidental that many infestations in the Willamette Valley are popular hiking and mountain biking venues. Cleaning boots, tires, and equipment when leaving areas of known slender false-brome infestation can reduce likelihood of seed transfer.



Figure 2.—Slender false-brome grows in clumps. Photo: Glenn Miller, Oregon Department of Agriculture.

Chemical control

Note: Before you apply herbicide on forest land, you must file a “notification of operations” with the Oregon Department of Forestry at least 15 days in advance.

The following information about herbicides is only a brief

summary; consult your local Extension agent or Oregon Department of Agriculture representative for specific recommendations for your situation. Read and follow the herbicide label carefully. Before spraying over or around seedlings, ensure the chemicals pose no hazard.

Broadcast application of systemic herbicides hexazinone or glyphosate has been effective for controlling false brome in some environments. Applying glyphosate (2 quarts/acre with a nonionic surfactant) followed by hexazinone (3 to 4 quarts/acre) has given good control.

Any herbicide treatment program should rotate among chemicals to prevent developing herbicide-resistant strains of the weed.

For details on chemical control, refer to the current edition of the *PNW Weed Management Handbook* and to *Herbicide-resistant Weeds and Their Management*, PNW 437, both available from the OSU Extension catalog <http://extension.oregonstate.edu/catalog/>

Mechanical control

Mowing may control slender false-brome if repeated for some time. Repeated mowing before seed set might eliminate seed production, thereby exhausting the seed bank. Burning appears to be ineffective in controlling the species.

Use pesticides safely!

- Wear protective clothing and safety devices as recommended on the label. Bathe or shower after each use.
- Read the pesticide label—even if you've used the pesticide before. Follow closely the instructions on the label (and any other directions you have).
- Be cautious when you apply pesticides. Know your legal responsibility as a pesticide applicator. You may be liable for injury or damage resulting from pesticide use.

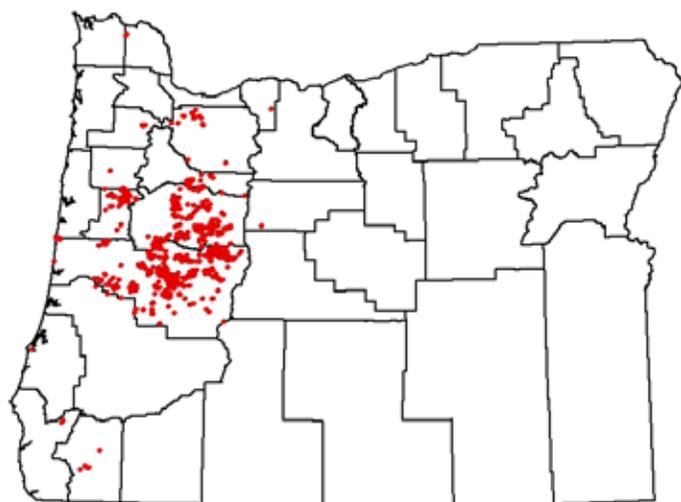


Figure 3.—Slender false-brome distribution in Oregon.
Map: Weedmapper.

Grazing

Sheep, goats, and cattle graze slender false-brome, but grazing has to be heavy enough to remove much of the aboveground plant. Otherwise, grazing is not as effective as mowing in eliminating seed production.

For more information

Institute for Applied Ecology, False-brome Working Group.
<http://www.appliedeco.org/invasive-species-resources/FBWG>

Invasive grass called false brome, threatens Oregon native plant diversity. Oregon State University Extension Service.
http://extension.oregonstate.edu/news/story.php?S_No=973&storyType=garden

The Nature Conservancy.
<http://tncweeds.ucdavis.edu/alert/alrtbrac.html>

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