

# Bald Brome

(Bromus racemosus)



Where does it grow? In western Oregon, bald brome is found on grass openings in the foothills. Pastures and meadows are common "hangouts" for bald brome, too. Bald brome can also be found on the lower forest fringes of the Columbia Basin.

Is it important? Bald brome is of little importance as there are no large stands, and it is of low palatability. It is considered a weed. Bald brome was introduced from Europe and is an invader on Oregon ranges. Like cheatgrass, it is grazed by livestock when young but matures and dries up early in the season.

What does it look like? It is similar to cheatgrass (RPL-4) except the heads are heavier and do not droop. Bald brome has erect stems 8 to 10 inches tall with a few leaves scattered on the stems. The seed has a stout awn 1/4 to 1/2 inch long.

Description:

Length of Life--Annual.

Height--Depends on the rainfall, but averages 8 to 10 inches. Sometimes it grows to 20 or more inches.

Growth period--It is a winter annual. With proper conditions, it germinates in the fall, survives the winter, and starts growth in the spring before other plants. It sets seed early and dries up by the last of July.

How does it spread?--Entirely by seed.

Leaves and stem--Softly hairy. Stems are erect with few leaves scattered along it. The leaf sheath margins, as with all bromes, are grown together into a solid tube.

Seed--Lacks hair and has a short, stout awn 1/4 to 1/2 inch long.

Other names--Smooth brome.

Does it look like anything else? Bald brome may be mistaken for soft chess or soft brome (Bromus mollis). Soft chess differs in that it has hair on the grain. Soft chess can often be found with bald brome. Without the seed head, it is almost impossible to distinguish these two as well as other annual bromes.