



Downy Brome

O & T Guide W-5

Frank Sholedice, Research Associate &
Mark Renz, Extension Weed Scientist



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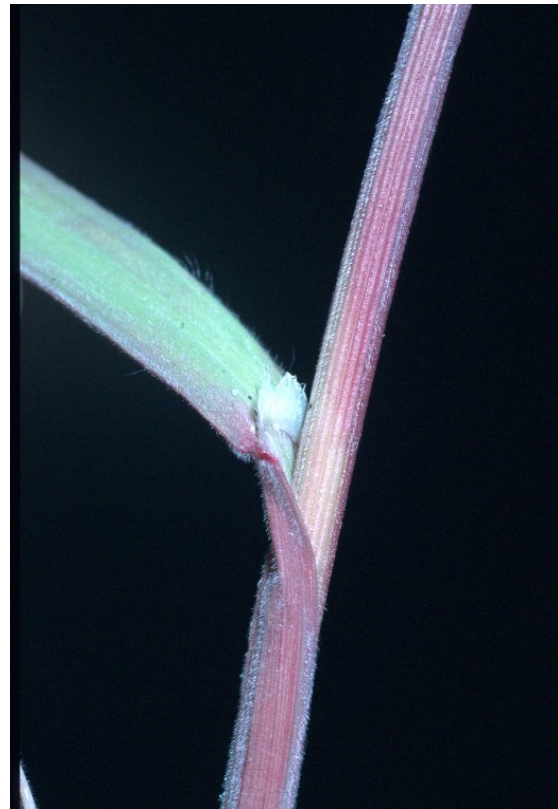
Downy brome, *Bromus tectorum*, is an annual grass that produces seeds on drooping branches. It has flat leaves that are rolled when budding, is usually green to purple in color, with some long hairs on the leaf base or sheath. Its seeds are tipped with bristles that may injure grazing animals or pets. Downy brome is also known as cheatgrass, drooping brome, military grass, broncgrass, and Mormon oats.

The plant produces erect stems that often droop, especially when in seed. Stems can grow to about 16 in. and are green to purple or red in color, sometimes with short or long hairs. Stem growth is highly variable depending on precipitation.



The leaf blades are flat (rolled when budding), several inches long by 0.05-0.25 in. wide, and green to purple in color.

The base of each leaf forms a sheath that extends at least halfway down the stem. The sheaths and leaf bases often have long hairs.



Downy brome produces drooping, slightly flattened branches at the stem ends that are 2.5-8.5 in. long, with 4-8 grass seeds branch. Individual seeds are 0.35-0.50 in. long and each seed is tipped with a straight bristle that is 0.3-0.7 in. long. The branches and seeds are green to purple or

red in color. The plant produces a fibrous root system to depths of up to 12 in. It reproduces by seed only. The plant is very flammable when dry and can cause extreme fire danger when large patches develop.



Management:

- Burning before seed dispersal will destroy seed but may leave the site susceptible to re-invasion in following years
- Mowing within a week after flowering will reduce seed production
- Cultivation two or three times shortly after germination is effective at controlling seedlings
- Herbicides are effective

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