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Quackgrass

Elymus repens (L.) Gould

Life cycle: Erect, rhizomatous perennial.

Leaves: Leaves are rolled in the bud, hairless to sparsely hairy above and up to 8 inches long. Leaf sheaths are hairless except those near the base, which may be sparsely hairy. Clasping, clawlike auricles are present at the collar region.

Ligule: Very short, membranous ligule.

Stems: Erect and clump-forming, up to 4 feet tall. Plants spread by thin, yellowish to white, sharp-tipped rhizomes.



All photos this page: Steven A. Gower

Patch of quackgrass.

Flowers and fruit: The seedhead is a two- to 10-inch-long, slender, unbranched spike made up of several alternating spikelets arranged edgewise on the stem. Each spikelet contains up to eight straw-colored, lance-shaped seeds. Each seed has a short to prominent awn.

Reproduction: Seeds and rhizomes.



Quackgrass collar region.



Quackgrass seedhead.



Sharp-tipped rhizome of quackgrass.