

Ryegrass, Annual (Italian Ryegrass)

[*Lolium multiflorum* Lam.]

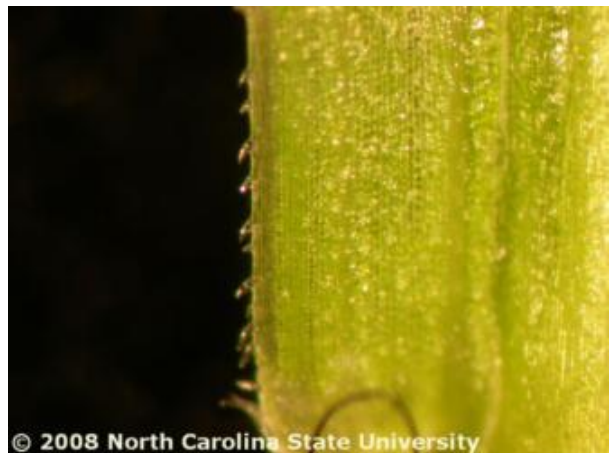
Annual ryegrass, also referred to as Italian ryegrass, is a bunch-type grass that can be used as a nurse crop for quick cover or for winter overseeding of bermudagrass on low maintenance athletic fields or golf courses. It does not possess the quality of perennial ryegrass and is not recommended for sites where high quality turf is desired. However, it is very inexpensive and can be used on low profile fields such as school, park or recreation sites where winter color is desirable. Its seedhead can be confused with that of quackgrass. Annual ryegrass does not have rhizomes, whereas quackgrass does. Annual ryegrass can be easily confused with tall fescue. However, tall fescue has rough leaf blade margins on the lower 1/3 - 1/2 of the leaf whereas annual ryegrass has smooth ones. Tall fescue has non-clasping auricles, whereas annual ryegrass has clasping auricles. The backside of the tall fescue leaf blade is less glossy than that of annual ryegrass.



Characteristic	Description
Seedhead / Flower	a spike, with spikelets along the main stem
Vernation Type	leaves rolled in the bud
Ligule Type	membranous; blunt, 0.04 - 0.08 inches (1 - 2 mm) long
Growth Season / Life Cycle	cool season turf or winter annual weed
Auricle Type	pointed or blunt or claw-like, clasping
Leaf Blade Tip Shape	sharp-pointed; bright green, upper surface dull, deeply ridged, lower surface smooth, glossy and slightly creased, edges smooth
Leaf Blade Width	0.1 - 0.28 inches (3 - 7 mm) wide
Stolon Presence	absent
Rhizome Presence	absent
Collar Type	continuous; indistinct, not hairy
Sheath Margin	split with overlapping margins
Sheath Type	round; pinkish at base



annual ryegrass, clasping auricles



annual ryegrass leaf edge

Note: Still not sure this is the right turfgrass? [The Turf & Weed Identification Decision Aid](#) may help. Check the TurfFiles [glossary](#) for definitions of unfamiliar terms.

Need help in selecting the best turfgrass for your particular situation? The [Turf/Cultivar Selection Decision Aid](#) will help you sort through the options which are available. For more information on turfgrass/cultivar selection, establishing a new lawn, caring for a new lawn, or renovating a lawn, see [AG-69, Carolina Lawns](#).

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