

# Ventenata

(*Ventenata dubia*)

Ventenata was first discovered in the U.S. in Washington and Idaho in the 1950's. It was first documented in Montana in the early 1990s and is increasing rapidly.

Characteristics:

- ◆ Height 6-18 inches
- ◆ Stem has dark red/black nodes
- ◆ Long slender ligule with tapered tip
- ◆ Panicle is open; branches diverge from the main stem at ~90° angles

**\*Priority 2A state listed noxious weed**



# Phragmites

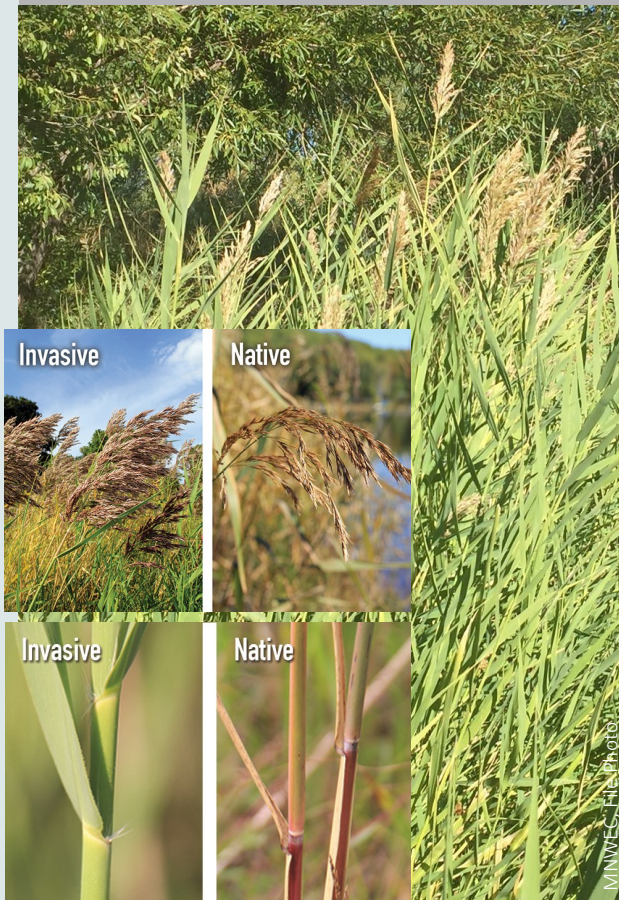
(*Phragmites australis* spp. *australis*)

Phragmites is a tall-statured perennial grass that grows in moist areas. Identification is difficult because a native sub-species that grows in Montana looks very similar.

Characteristics:

- ◆ Height 6-15 feet
- ◆ Plume-like flowers, purple or golden hue
- ◆ Stoloniferous or rhizomatous roots
- ◆ Grows in moist areas
- ◆ Invasive stems green, native stems reddish

**\*Priority 1A state listed noxious weed**



# Medusahead

(*Taeniatherum caput-medusae*)

Medusahead was first discovered in the U.S. in 1887 and found in Montana in 2013. It is not palatable to livestock and infestations decrease forage availability.

Characteristics:

- ◆ Height 6-24 inches
- ◆ Long-awned spike
- ◆ 1-4" awns
- ◆ Awns are twisted, stiff, minutely barbed
- ◆ Shiny green-yellow color

**\*Priority 1A state listed noxious weed**



# Cheatgrass

(*Bromus tectorum*)

Cheatgrass was first discovered in the U.S. in the late 1890's and is problematic in much of the West. It reduces biodiversity and forage availability and increases wildfire risk.

Characteristics:

- ◆ Height 4-30 inches
- ◆ Entire plant is hairy
- ◆ Panicle occurs in a "nodding" fashion
- ◆ Inflorescence changes from green to reddish-purple as plant matures

**\*Priority 3 state regulated plant**



# Japanese brome

*(Bromus japonicus)*

# Invasive Grasses?

# Other Resources:

Japanese brome is native to southern and south-central Europe and Asia. It was first identified in the U.S. in 1861 and negatively impacts perennial grass biodiversity.

Characteristics:

- ◆ Height 4-24 inches
- ◆ Awns are straight or curved outward
- ◆ Hairs occur on lower portion of stem, similar to cheatgrass only hairier
- ◆ Awns not usually hairy
- ◆ Panicle is open and similar to cheatgrass; droops to one side, however seeds are more plump than cheatgrass causing the panicle to droop entirely to one side.

**\*This plant is NOT a noxious weed; however, it is considered invasive.**

What exactly is an invasive grass?

Much like noxious weeds, invasive grasses are non-native plants that the Montana Department of Agriculture (MDA) has identified as having the potential to be detrimental to agriculture, the economy and the environment.

MDA sets criteria for listing plants as “noxious,” and those selected are placed on the state noxious weed list. According to Montana’s County Noxious Weed Control Act, it is illegal for landowners to let noxious weeds “propagate or go to seed on their land.” This Act requires landowners to manage plants that are listed on the state noxious weed list.

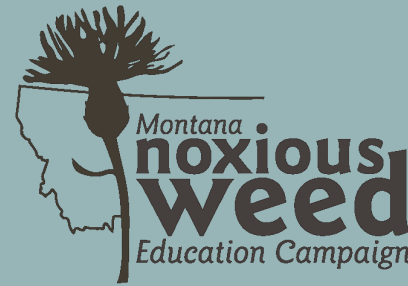
County Weed Coordinators and Montana State University Extension Agents are available to answer noxious weed questions and provide weed identification to advise land owners in reaching weed management goals for their property.

To find your local County Weed Coordinator and Extension Agent visit:

[mtweed.org](http://mtweed.org)

## Invasive grasses currently on Montana’s State Noxious Weed list:

- Medusahead (*Taeniatherum caput-medusae*)
- Ventenata (*Ventenata dubia*)
- Phragmites (*Phragmites australis* spp. *australis*)



Visit us on the web:

[WeedAwareness.org](http://WeedAwareness.org)



Funding for this publication provided by:



Natural Resources Conservation Service



**Awn**— A stiff bristle that is attached to the seed or floret

**Inflorescence**— The complete flower head of a plant

**Ligule**— a membranous scale on the inner side of the leaf sheath at its junction with the blade

**Node**— Joint in the stem or a point of attachment of a leaf or branches of a stem

**Panicle**— A loose branching type of inflorescence

**Spike**— A type of inflorescence in which flowers are attached to the plant without any stalks

For the most up-to-date version of the Montana Noxious Weed List, visit:

[agr.mt.gov](http://agr.mt.gov)

## Glossary



Japanese brome photos credit: Matt Lavin, Flickr



# Invasive Grasses in Montana



Ryan Steinecker, Oregon State University