

Quackgrass

Elytrigia repens (L.) Nevski

Family: Poaceae

Life cycle: Perennial, reproducing by rhizomes and seed

Habitat: Crop fields, forages, turf. Adapted to cool temperatures and more common in northern Iowa.

General description: Early emerging erect plant typically found in small, distinct patches due to spread by rhizomes. Sheaths and leaves may be hairy or smooth. Plants can reach heights of 3 feet. Spikelets (seeds) are arranged in two rows along the seedhead.

Key ID traits: Clasping auricles; short, membranous ligule; smooth rhizomes

Similar species: Tall fescue and several ryegrasses (*Lolium* spp.) are frequently mistaken for quackgrass due to similar styles of seedheads; however, only quackgrass has long rhizomes.

Miscellaneous: Native to Europe, introduced to North America in the 1600's as a contaminant in hay and straw.



Quackgrass rhizome



Quackgrass auricle

