

North African Grass Fact Sheet

Ventenata dubia

Poaceae Family



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Distinguishing Features:

- ❶ **Flowers:** The flower head is an open cluster appearing light green but turning yellow-brown rapidly after opening. The flowers appear similar to tufts of fur of the same color.
- ❷ **Seeds:** Each flower head produces one seed with an average production of 35 per plant. Seeds persist in the soil for 2-3 years only.
- ❸ **Leaves:** Leaves occur mostly on the lower half of the stems and are narrow, smooth-edged blades. They are hairless on their upper surface and covered with fine hairs below. As they age, they become rolled and brittle.
- ❹ **Flowering Time:** North African Grass flowers appear from June to August.
- ❺ **Life cycle:** North African Grass is an annual winter grass. It germinates in the fall, produce seed heads in late spring to early summer, releases seeds in late summer for germination in the fall.



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Impacts:

- North African Grass infestation in hay fields can decrease yield by up to 50% as the grass is not palatable to livestock and cannot be sold.
- North African grass readily outcompetes most perennial grass species and leads to a drop in biodiversity when it colonizes an area.
- African Mustard seeds can be harvested to produce oil. It is cultivated as an oil plant in India and Tibet.

Control:

- It is possible to control North African Grass manually with multiple years of intensive management. Mowing can also be effective if done prior to the production of seed heads.
- There are currently no biocontrol agents approved for use on North African Grass in the US.
- North African Grass can be controlled by some herbicides, but has shown resistance to Glyphosate and similar products. For suggestions on the best chemical methods to use on North African Grass, contact the Salt Lake Valley USU extension.



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