

(revision date:6/9/2014)

## ***Weeds: Downy brome (Cheatgrass, Downy chess)(*Bromus tectorum*)***

family: *Poaceae (Graminae)*

cycle *Winter annual*

plant type: *Grass*

**Use Integrated Pest Management (IPM) for successful plant problem management.**

### ***Biology***

Downy brome is a winter annual (sometimes a summer annual) reproducing by seed. Germination typically occurs during late summer or fall, with overwintering plants resuming growth in the spring. Plants can reach over two feet high in good growing conditions, but are typically shorter (four inches and up). Leaves are green (sometimes reddish) in color and are covered with soft hairs at all stages of maturity. Ligules, which are found around the stem at the junction of the leaf blade and leaf sheath, are membranous and medium-tall with jagged edges. Sheaths are hairy with prominent veins, and auricles are absent. The flowering stems are slender and drooping, with seeds typically arranged along one side. Seedheads are frequently purplish and may reach an overall length of six inches.

**SPECIAL INFORMATION:** Downy brome plants become dry after producing seed and dense stands can become a serious fire hazard. Dry seeds can be a nuisance to humans and animals due to their habit of working into clothing, fur, and soft tissues of the mouth. Dogs in particular may suffer from seeds working into ears and between toes.

### ***Habitat***

Downy brome is a common weed of waste areas, roadsides, pastures, rangeland, and cultivated areas, especially in dry areas of Eastern Washington.

### ***Management Options***

#### **Non-Chemical Management**

- ~ Cultivation (rototilling or hoeing) will effectively eliminate plants.
- ~ Hand-pull to eliminate weeds.
- ~ Apply organic mulches, such as bark, compost, grass clippings, straw, and other materials, in a layer from two to several inches thick for effective weed management.

***Select non-chemical management options as your first choice!***

#### **Chemical Management**

***IMPORTANT: Visit Home and Garden Fact Sheets for more information on using pesticides***

Apply according to label instructions. Glyphosate products should be applied as spot treatments only!

**NOTE:** Some ingredients listed here are only available in combination. Read the label carefully on combination products to make sure the product is suitable for your specific situation.

Landscape Areas

- glyphosate

Turf Areas

Bare Ground Areas

- glyphosate

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**Images**



~ Caption: Downy brome  
~ Photo by: J.A. Kropf



~ Caption: Downy brome established in field  
~ Photo by: J.A. Kropf