

Cheatgrass (*Bromus tectorum* L.)

This weed is found in any disturbed area: overgrazed areas, the first few years after a wildfire, roadsides, alleys, expansion cracks in paved roads and sidewalks, and abandoned crop fields. This photo shows a cheatgrass inflorescence (a group of several to many flowers or seeds that are all on the same stalk) when it is drying up and the awns (bristle like appendage of a plant) are hardening. Grazing at this stage would injure an herbivore's mouth. (photo by D. Heinze)



Note the inverse proportion between the small biomass of the cheatgrass roots and the large biomass of its seeds. As an annual, it absolutely must produce enough seed to produce at least one plant in subsequent years or it will become extinct. Like most annuals, cheatgrass produces a great amount of seed. (Drawing by US Department of Agriculture)

The cheatgrass inflorescence is shown in this illustration. This weed gets one of its alternative common names, nodding brome, from the nodding habit of its spikelets. A floret is shown to the left (one of the closely clustered small flowers that make up the flower head of a composite flower). The seed is the dark part of the floret. The stiff awn is on top. Note the hairs on the upper right side of the floret. (Drawing by US Department of Agriculture)

