

# AROUND BRITAIN IN 25 GRASSES - HANDOUT

		LEAF	VEGETATIVE FEATURES	FLOWERS	Habitat
<i>Agrostis capillaris</i>	Common Bent	Spear-like leaves, dying off to rusty-red	Small ligule- 'cleric's collar', shorter than wide	Tickle grass - head always open, long stem	CG/H
<i>Agrostis stolonifera</i>	Creeping Bent	Spear-like leaves, long creeping runners	Ligule long, rounded and raggedy	Head only open during flowering, short stem	MG/RV/WE
<i>Alopecurus geniculatus</i>	Marsh Foxtail	Inflated sheaths, with brown remains	Creeping with strongly kneed joints	Slim microphone flower head with single awns	WG
<i>Anisantha sterilis</i>	Barren Brome	Droopy leaves	Lower sheaths hairy, upper hairless	Drooping heads, v. long spined awns	RV/ARABLE
<i>Anthoxanthum odoratum</i>	Sweet Vernal Grass	Short leaves glossy beneath	Auricle fringed with whiskers. Dettol smell to roots	Early flowering with tight spike that briefly opens	CG/H/MG
<i>Arrhenatherum elatius</i>	False Oat-grass	Leaves form spirals, esp. when older	Bulbous orange swelling at base of stem; 45° bend	Long dangly whitish flower heads, bent awns	MG/RV
<i>Avenula pratensis</i>	Meadow Oat-grass	Very tough glaucous leaves with tramlines	White spots on leaves, which angle off tightly	Simple sparse oaty inflorescence with 4 awns	CG
<i>Briza media</i>	Quaking-grass	Basal leaves 90° to sheath, undulating	Ligule a blunt membrane, purple spots on leaves	Droopy, loose pyramidal head of dancing flowers	CG
<i>Bromopsis erecta</i>	Upright Brome	Basal leaves with camel's eyelashes	Stem hairless, sheaths hairy	Spikelets on short stems, resembling interlocking 'V's	CG
<i>Carex flacca</i>	Glaucous Sedge	Leaves grey/blue below, green above	Non-Trigonous tip	Fruit egg-shaped, first female inflorescence dangly	CG/H/MG/M
<i>Carex pilulifera</i>	Pill Sedge	Lime green leaves	Densely tufted plant	Stem curved to ground, smooth then rough at top 1cm	H
<i>Cynosurus cristatus</i>	Crested Dog's-tail	Lower leaves 90°, stem leaves 45°. Shiny below	Compact ligule, sheath yellow (cf. purple in <i>L per</i> )	One-sided erect spike, dead heads persist	CG/MG
<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>	Cock's-foot	Big, often glaucous. Forms tussocks with folded leaves	Base of stem flattened	Very clumpy flowerheads - opens up to chicken's foot	MG/RV
<i>Danthonia decumbens</i>	Heath-grass	Glaucous above, shiny below. Hairy towards base	Long sticky out nose hairs on leaf collar	3- clumpy hard fat fruits	H/U/CG
<i>Deschampsia cespitosa</i>	Tufted Hair-grass	Bristly 'one-way' ridged leaves with v. long ligule	Big erect tussocks	Big feathery open flowerheads	RV/WE/WO/MG
<i>Deschampsia flexuosa</i>	Wavy Hair-grass	Needle like hairless smooth dark green leaves	Short rounded ligule	Small glossy flowers on flexuous stems	H
<i>Festuca ovina</i>	Sheep's-fescue	Needle leaves throughout. Sheath cloaked	Forms dense tufts, often with black roots. Up to 40cm.	Small spikelets 5-6mm	CG/H
<i>Festuca rubra</i>	Red Fescue	Needle leaves at base, flat on stem. Sheath tubed	Hairy sheaths, more spreading growth form. To 80cm.	Larger spikelets 7-14mm	H/MG/RV/CG
<i>Holcus lanatus</i>	Yorkshire-fog	Velvet soft leaves and sheaths	Pink stripy pajamas at stem base	Pink-tinged flowerheads, opening to feathery heads	CG/MG/RV/WO
<i>Juncus conglomeratus</i>	Compact Rush	Matt dark green stems, only ridged below inflorescence	Ridges spiral and leaves often corkscrew	Dark red compact ball-like inflorescence	WE
<i>Juncus effusus</i>	Soft Rush	Glossy green smooth stems (sometimes yellow)	Continuous spongy pith in stem	Inflorescence can be closed or open	MG/WE/WO
<i>Juncus inflexus</i>	Hard Rush	Grey-green matt thin ridged stems	Interrupted pith inside stem; v. strong	Inflorescences very open	H/WE
<i>Juncus squarrosus</i>	Heath Rush	Basal rosette of tough very grooved leaves	Leaves come out of ground and then push sideward	Chunky fruits, showy in flower	H
<i>Lolium perenne</i>	Perennial Ryegrass	Waxy shiny dark green leaves	Clasping auricle. Burgundy red/purple at base of stem	Spiked inflorescence, spikelets barely overlapping	MG/RV
<i>Nardus stricta</i>	Mat-grass	Needle like leaves, bent almost on right-angle	Small tussocks, firmly rooted	Flowers strange whip-like black spikelets	H

Habitat: CG - Calcareous grassland, MG - Neutral Grassland, WG - Damp Grassland, H - Heath and Acid Grassland, WO - Woodland, M - Mire/bog, RV - Road verge, wasteland, WE - Wetland/Aquatic, UR - Urban