

Neutral Grassland

MG

<u><i>Agrostis stolonifera</i></u>	<u>Creeping Bent</u>
<u><i>Alopecurus pratensis</i></u>	<u>Meadow Foxtail</u>
<u><i>Anthoxanthum odoratum</i></u>	<u>Sweet Vernal Grass</u>
<u><i>Arrhenatherum elatius</i></u>	<u>False Oat-grass</u>
<u><i>Brachypodium sylvaticum</i></u>	<u>False Brome</u>
<u><i>Bromus hordeaceus</i></u>	<u>Soft-brome</u>
<u><i>Carex caryophylla</i></u>	<u>Spring Sedge</u>
<u><i>Carex hirta</i></u>	<u>Hairy Sedge</u>
<u><i>Cynosurus cristatus</i></u>	<u>Crested Dog's-tail</u>
<u><i>Dactylis glomerata</i></u>	<u>Cock's-foot</u>
<u><i>Deschampsia cespitosa</i></u>	<u>Tufted Hairgrass</u>
<u><i>Elymus repens</i></u>	<u>Common Couch</u>
<u><i>Festuca rubra</i></u>	<u>Red Fescue</u>
<u><i>Holcus lanatus</i></u>	<u>Yorkshire-fog</u>
<u><i>Hordeum secalinum</i></u>	<u>Meadow Barley</u>
<u><i>Juncus effusus</i></u>	<u>Soft Rush</u>
<u><i>Lolium perenne</i></u>	<u>Perennial Ryegrass</u>
<u><i>Luzula campestris</i></u>	<u>Field Wood-rush</u>
<u><i>Phleum pratense</i></u>	<u>Timothy</u>
<u><i>Poa pratensis</i></u>	<u>Smooth Meadow-grass</u>
<u><i>Poa trivialis</i></u>	<u>Rough Meadow-grass</u>
<u><i>Schedonorus arundinaceus</i></u>	<u>Tall Fescue</u>
<u><i>Schedonorus pratensis</i></u>	<u>Meadow Fescue</u>

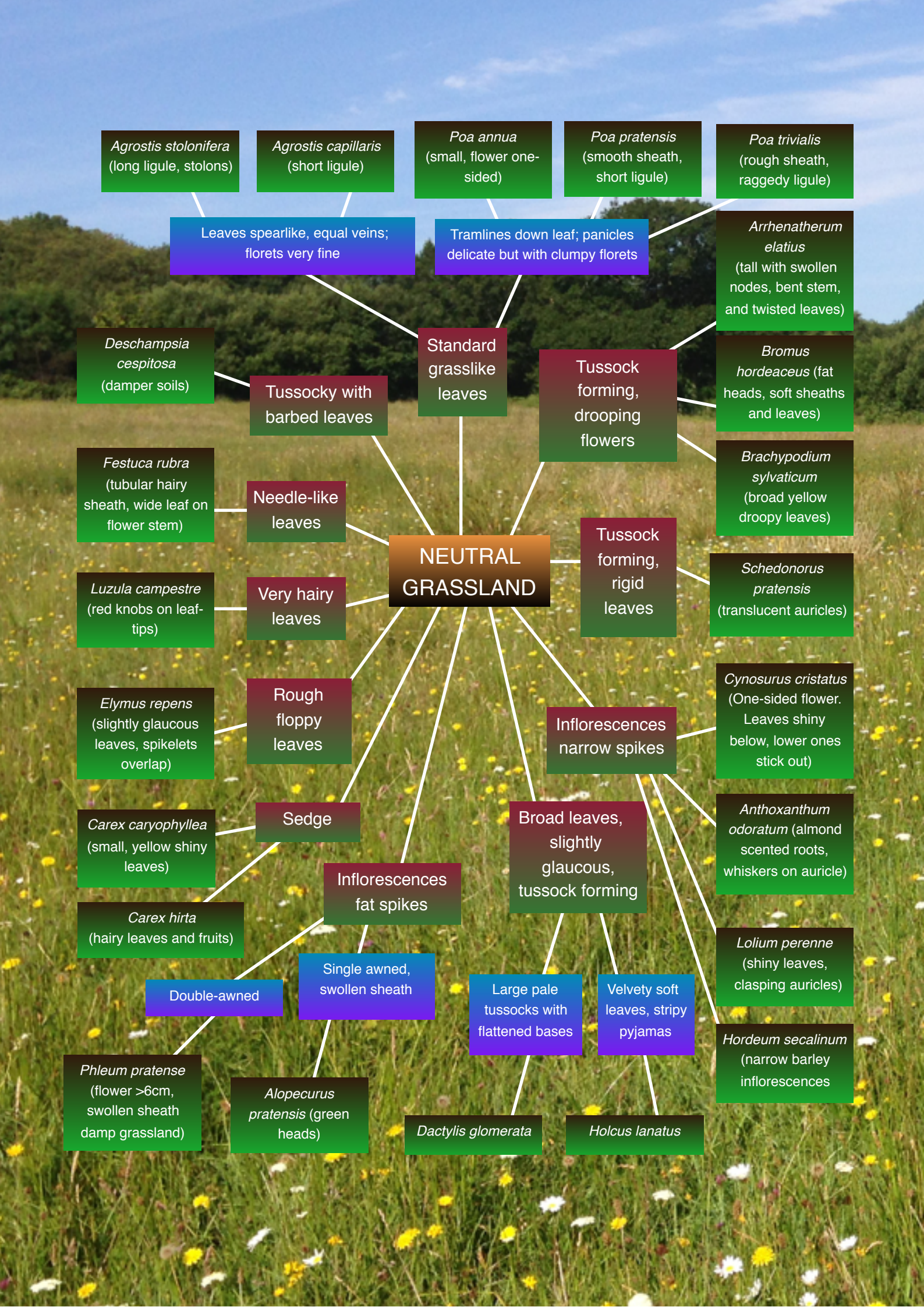
Extract from 'A Field Guide to  
Grasses, Sedges and Rushes'  
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Neutral grasslands cover a range of habitat types, from rarely encountered unimproved meadows, through to more common semi-improved and improved pastures and leys. One of the more notable species is Perennial Ryegrass; virtually absent from the best quality unimproved grassland, but increasingly dominant as nutrient levels rise and diversity falls and thus extremely useful as a habitat indicator species.

In damper situations levels of Yorkshire-fog tend to increase, and eventually clumps of Soft Rush appear as this habitat grades into marshy grassland and swamp.

A dominance of tussocky grasses, notably False Oat-grass and Cock's-foot, can suggest under-management and corresponding low overall diversity.





NEUTRAL  
GRASSLAND

*Agrostis stolonifera*  
(long ligule, stolons)

*Agrostis capillaris*  
(short ligule)

*Poa annua*  
(small, flower one-sided)

*Poa pratensis*  
(smooth sheath, short ligule)

*Poa trivialis*  
(rough sheath, raggedy ligule)

Leaves spearlike, equal veins;  
florets very fine

Tramlines down leaf; panicles  
delicate but with clumpy florets

*Arrhenatherum  
elatius*  
(tall with swollen  
nodes, bent stem,  
and twisted leaves)

*Deschampsia  
cespitosa*  
(damper soils)

Tussocky with  
barbed leaves

Standard  
grasslike  
leaves

Tussock  
forming,  
drooping  
flowers

*Bromus  
hordeaceus* (fat  
heads, soft sheaths  
and leaves)

*Festuca rubra*  
(tubular hairy  
sheath, wide leaf on  
flower stem)

Needle-like  
leaves

*Brachypodium  
sylvaticum*  
(broad yellow  
droopy leaves)

*Luzula campestre*  
(red knobs on leaf-  
tips)

Very hairy  
leaves

Tussock  
forming,  
rigid  
leaves

*Schedonorus  
pratensis*  
(translucent auricles)

*Elymus repens*  
(slightly glaucous  
leaves, spikelets  
overlap)

Rough  
floppy  
leaves

Inflorescences  
narrow spikes

*Cynosurus cristatus*  
(One-sided flower.  
Leaves shiny  
below, lower ones  
stick out)

*Carex caryophyllea*  
(small, yellow shiny  
leaves)

Sedge

Broad leaves,  
slightly  
glaucous,  
tussock forming

*Anthoxanthum  
odoratum* (almond  
scented roots,  
whiskers on auricle)

*Carex hirta*  
(hairy leaves and fruits)

Inflorescences  
fat spikes

*Lolium perenne*  
(shiny leaves,  
clasping auricles)

Double-awned

Single awned,  
swollen sheath

Large pale  
tussocks with  
flattened bases

Velvety soft  
leaves, stripy  
pyjamas

*Hordeum secalinum*  
(narrow barley  
inflorescences)

*Phleum pratense*  
(flower >6cm,  
swollen sheath  
damp grassland)

*Alopecurus  
pratensis* (green  
heads)

*Dactylis glomerata*

*Holcus lanatus*