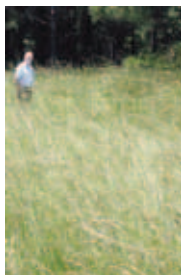


Tall Fescue



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Tall fescue [*Schedonorus phoenix* (Scop.) Holub] [formerly *S. arundinaceus* (Schreb.) Dumort., *Lolium arundinaceum* (Schreb.) S.J. Darbyshire, *Festuca arundinacea* Schreb., and *F. elatior* L. ssp. *arundinacea* (Schreb.) Hack.] is an erect, tufted cool-season perennial grass, 2 to 4 feet (60 to 120 cm) in height. It has whitish-eared areas where leaf blades connect to the stem, and the stem has swollen nodes. Dark-green seedstalks and leaves appear in late winter, usually flowering in spring (infrequently in late summer). This grass is dormant in midsummer. Most tall fescue is infected with a fungus that can reduce weight gains and lower reproductive rates in livestock, while adversely affecting the nutrition of songbirds and the Canada goose (*Branta canadensis*). Tall fescue monocultures are generally poor habitat for wildlife, especially ground nesting birds. Still sold and widely planted for soil stabilization, pastures, and reclamation, with many cultivars available. Species spreads by expanding root crowns and somewhat less by seeds.

Management strategies:

- Do not plant. Remove prior plantings, and control sprouts and seedlings. Bag and dispose of plants and seeds in a dumpster or burn.
- Treat when new plants are young to prevent seed formation.
- Pull, cut, and treat when seed are not present.
- Minimize disturbance where this plant occurs, and anticipate wider occupation when plants are present before disturbance.
- Early spring burning, if repeated, inhibits fescue and encourages native warm-season grasses.
- Readily eaten by most livestock although toxic in certain seasons.

Recommended control procedures:

- On forest lands, apply a glyphosate herbicide as a 5-percent solution in water (2 quarts per 10 gallons mix per acre) or when there are no concerns for surrounding plants, Arsenal AC* as a 1-percent solution (25 ounces per 20 gallons mix per acre) in spring.
- On noncroplands, apply 10 to 12 ounces of Plateau* or 20 to 24 ounces of Journey* per 20 gallons mix per acre (consult the label for additives) in spring. Mixing Plateau with a glyphosate herbicide will improve control but may damage associated native plants. Vantage (sethoxydim), Poast® (sethoxydim), Assure® II (quizalofop), and Select® 2 EC (clethodim) may be useful in certain situations for establishing or releasing native grasses, but they are usually more costly than using Journey or a glyphosate mix with Plateau.

* Nontarget plants may be killed or injured by root uptake.