

Wild Rye Comparison



Early Wild Rye: (*Elymus macgregorii*) Matures very early (usually completely brown by end of June in Missouri); Awns of indeterminate length; Seedhead looks like a “less robust” Southeast Wild Rye; Stems are weak and sometimes bend at nodes; Common in river or creek bottoms under trees, but in other upland locations as well.



Southeast Wild Rye: (*Elymus virginicus* var. *glabriflorus*) Matures late (seedhead emerges around the end of June in Missouri); Seedhead is well above the flag leaf; Long awns; Usually found on uplands; Blue-green leaves; Whitish cast (glaucous) on stem below seedhead & also on sheath of flag leaf.



Jejunus Wild Rye: (*Elymus virginicus* var. *jejunus*) Matures after Early Wild Rye, but before Virginia Wild Rye; Has a very long distance between the seedhead and the flag leaf; Short awns; When seedhead looked at from above, it appears “pressed-in-a-book,” or slightly rectangular.



Virginia Wild Rye: (*Elymus virginicus* var. *virginicus*) Matures late; Flag leaf usually at or on seedhead making it look like the seedhead didn't fully emerge; Short awns; Often on low ground, but not always.



Bottlebrush Grass: (*Elymus hystrix*) Long awns; Considerable space between seeds in seedhead; Seeds are almost perpendicular to the stem instead of pointing strongly upward.



Canada Wild Rye: (*Elymus canadensis*) Matures late; Flag leaf well below seedhead; Long, recurved awns once seedhead is mature; seed-head nods (Two other Wild Ryes also have nodding seedheads: Silky Wild Rye and Riverbank Wild Rye).

NOTE: Wild Ryes can cross!

See our website for more info & videos on Wild Ryes