

Name

Arrhenatherum elatius

False oat-grass



Habitat/Range A very familiar grass, found in a wide range of neutral to base-rich habitats. It is the characteristic grass of MG1 community, typical of neutral grasslands and found on road verges, along hedges and river banks, often in association with cocksfoot. It is a coloniser and stabiliser of limestone scree, bare calcareous cliffs and maritime shingle and is also found in coastal dunes. It is found all over the UK from sea-level to the uplands (0 – 550 m) but avoids the most mountainous areas of central and northern Scotland.

Identification A large tufted and erect-growing perennial grass 50-150 cm tall. Leaves are quite broad and light green and generally lax and rough or slightly hairy, ligules are membranous and 1-3 mm long and quite smooth-edged. The panicles are long, between 10 and 30 cm, composed of bunches of silky shining spikelets with conspicuous long (10-17 mm), angled awns. Panicles are quite persistent and will remain identifiable well into winter.



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