



## WEEDS

# WILD OATS (BEARDED OAT, LUDO WILD OAT)

## *Avena* sp.

### Glossary

#### Annual

Completing the full cycle of germination to fruiting to a single year, and then dying.

#### Florets

One of the small reduced flowers.

#### Inflorescence

The arrangement of the flowers and flower axes.

#### Opportunistically

Grows all year round when conditions are favourable.

#### Spikelets

Unbranched inflorescence of sessile (stalkless) flowers.

#### Tufted

Loose clumping of stems at base.

### For More Information

#### Contact

Eastern Hills Catchment Management Program  
Tel: (08) 9424 2222

Shire of Mundaring  
Bushcare Co-ordinator  
Tel: (08) 9290 6685

Shire of Kalamunda  
Bushcare Co-ordinator  
Tel: (08) 9257 9936

### Introduction

Wild oats have been described as one of the most serious weeds found in cereal crops around the world.

There are 3 main pest species of Oats: Wild Oat (*Avena fatua*), Bearded Oat (*Avena barbata*) and Ludo Wild Oat (*Avena sterilis*).

Wild Oats' highly competitive nature, mimicry of crops, staggered germination and their ability to produce large numbers of seeds, are attributes that make Wild Oats a significant weed of winter cropping systems in Australia.

They are a widespread pest species in the high rainfall areas of the wheat belt and are an increasing problem on disturbed land areas, such as: road verges and cleared land.

### Origin

Bearded Oat: Mediterranean region.  
Wild Oat: Southern Europe.  
Ludo Wild Oat: Mediterranean region and Asia.

### Lifeform

Annual grass.

### Description

Erect, tufted grass.  
Bearded Oat: 0.3-1.0 m tall.  
Wild Oat: 0.6-0.9 m tall.  
Ludo Wild Oat: 0.45 m tall.

**Leaves:** Spikelets; 2-2.5 cm long.

**Flowers/Seedhead:** Green; loosely branched inflorescence; drooping spikelets each with two to three florets.

### Reproduction & Dispersal

Reproduces by seeds, which are dispersed by airborne means, mammals and wind in spring.

### Growing Habit

Grows opportunistically.

### Distribution

Bearded Oat: Throughout Avon Valley; Shark Bay - Esperance, some along Nullabor.

Wild Oat: Scattered throughout Avon Valley; inland of Geraldton - Albany.  
Ludo Wild Oat: 3 localities: Shark Bay and 2 in the Avon Valley.

### Growing Season

The seeds are dormant over summer and germination occurs in autumn and early winter.

### Flowering Season

August - December.

### Effect on Ecosystem

It seldom grows in undisturbed native bushland.

### Control

#### Manual Removal

Slash or graze infestations. It is not always necessary to

remove the plant, because as an annual, it will die anyway at the onset of summer. Prohibiting new seed set will result in exhaustion of the seed store over time (3 - 5 years).

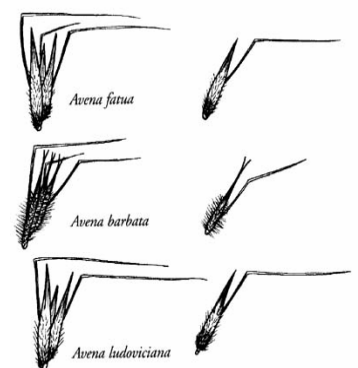
This may be achieved by hand pulling, regular mowing, grazing or spraying with chemicals. Pay particular attention in spring when plants may produce seed quickly.

#### Chemical Treatment

A grass selective herbicide + wetting agent can be used effectively for blanket and spot spraying. Follow-up will need to continue for the next two years.

In areas with native grasses reduce the herbicide dose.

Please see 'Herbicides and Pesticides' factsheet for more information about spraying chemicals.



In partnership with

