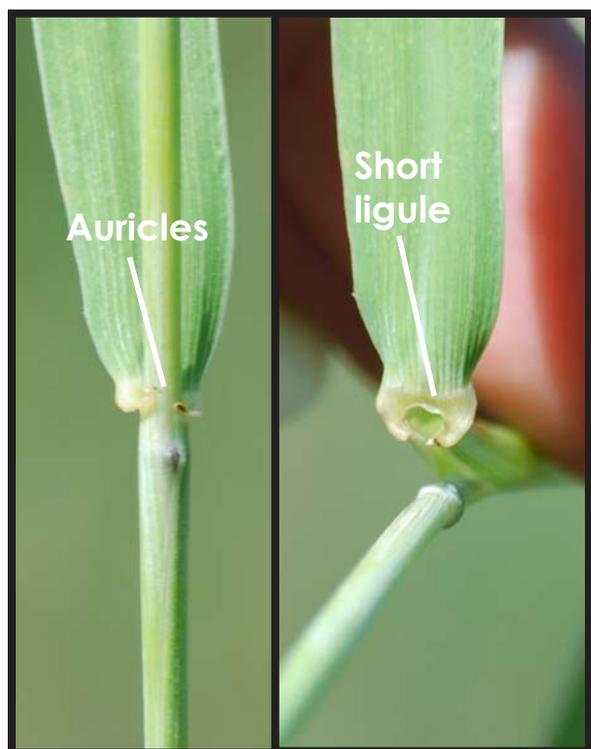


# Virginia wild rye

*Elymus virginicus*

Minnesota C-Value: 4  
Wetland Indicator Status: FACW-  
Native



**Leaves:** 5-15 mm wide, both sides rough to touch. Sheaths mostly open, sometimes purplish at base. Auricles typically present, clawlike. Ligules short (0.5 mm) membranous, truncate to rounded.

**Stems:** Up to 5 ft. Light green, smooth, and erect.

**Flowers and fruit:** Spike 2-6 in. long. Densely covered with stiff ascending spikelets. Awns straight, up to 1 cm long.

**Plant communities:** Variable, including streambanks, floodplains, marsh edges, fields, and disturbed sites.

**Comments:** Perennial cool-season bunchgrass. Distinguished by its stiff, erect spikes and straight awns. Used as a cover crop in seed mixes for wetlands. Its FAC<sup>-</sup> relative, Canada wild rye (*E. canadensis*) has wider leaf blades, larger drooping spikes, and awns that spread outward when mature.