

Name

Agrostis capillaris

Common Bent



Habitat/Range

A low-growing perennial grass found on dry to damp ground in neutral to acidic soils, occurring in neutral grassland as well as acid grassland swards. It is found over the whole of the British isles, from sea level to mountain tops (Ben Lawers, 1,210 m). Also found as part of heath, woodland/scrub and sand dune habitats as well as on post-industrial sites.

It forms a dense sward of quite fine leaves that taper almost directly from the ligule down to the finely pointed tip. The ligule is short and membranous and does not come to a point (unlike creeping bent). The flowering panicle becomes evident from May to June and is finely branched with numerous very small spikelets forming a reddish-purple haze over the mat of leaves. The open panicle distinguishes this from the similarly fine creeping bent and the small spikelets make flowering fescue and meadowgrass (*Poa* spp.) look very clumpy by comparison. After seeds have been shed, the bare panicles usually persist all winter.



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