

Name

Cynosurus cristatus

Crested dog's-tail



Habitat/Range This short-lived perennial grass is found in a wide range of swards, especially short and heavily grazed neutral and calcareous grasslands, both unimproved and semi-improved. It thrives in a variety of soil types but avoids both acid and limy extremes. It is spread throughout the British Isles and is generally a lowland species, but reaches over 800m in Cumbria. It likes fairly well-drained soils and does not tolerate water-logging very well; it withstands light traffic and is often found along footpaths and tracks through grasslands. It is widely distributed beyond its native range due to frequent inclusion in seed mixes.

Identification Growing in compact tufts this perennial grass has culms of 5 to 75 cm tall, generally very stiff-looking with narrow green and generally hairless leaves. The ligules are short and blunt. The panicle forms a stiff one-sided spike with dense clusters of spikelets, some fertile some sterile, arranged in fan-shapes along the stem, giving the spike a jagged outline.



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