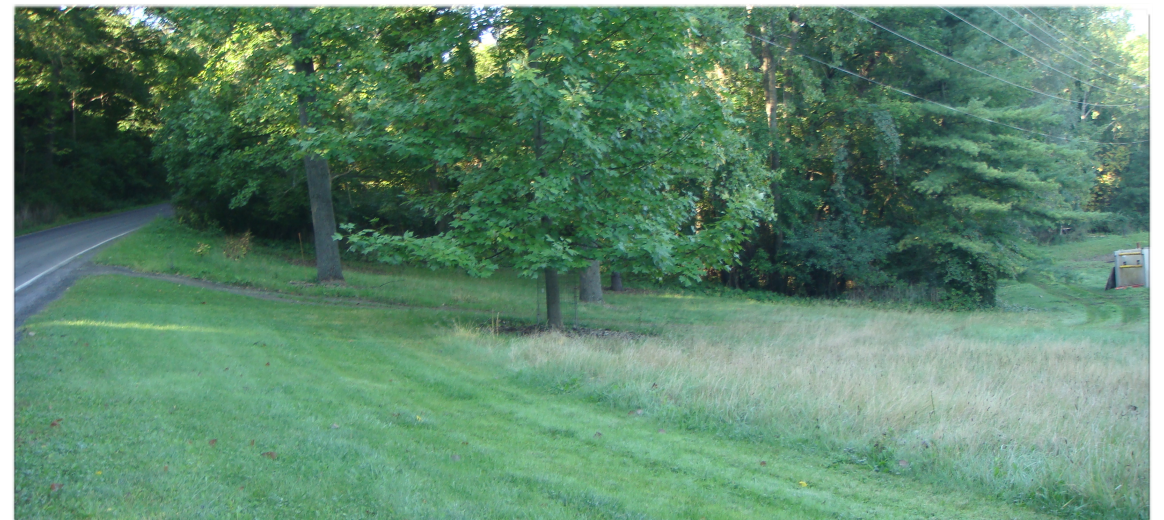


OTHER GRASSES



Less commonly used turfgrass species may be the best choice in some cases. The following sections cover some of these grasses, including annual ryegrass (*Lolium multiflorum*), roughstalk bluegrass (*Poa trivialis*), supina bluegrass (*Poa supina*), annual bluegrass (*Poa annua*) and zoysiagrass (*Zoysia* spp.)



• ANNUAL RYEGRASS •

Of note...

1. Annual ryegrass seed is cheap and often found in poor quality seed mixes. Common varieties include 'Gulf' and 'Panterra'.
2. Intermediate ryegrass is a hybrid between annual ryegrass and perennial ryegrass. Developed to combine superior turf qualities of perennial ryegrass with rapid germination and establishment of annual ryegrass, its primary use is as a temporary cover.



Annual ryegrass (*Lolium multiflorum*), also called Italian ryegrass, is a cool-season species that has aggressive seedling growth. It outcompetes desirable species during establishment, but it is not tolerant of temperature extremes and usually dies out after one season. Used for overseeding dormant bermudagrass in the south, its practical

use in our climate is limited to areas where temporary turf cover is desired or as a nurse grass for the desired species. When appearance of temporary turf is important, improved varieties such as 'Axcella' and 'Candidame' are darker green and finer textured than common types.

• ROUGHSTALK BLUEGRASS •

Of note...

1. The first turf-type variety, 'Sabre', was released in 1995. More recent introductions include 'Sabre III', 'Stardust II', 'Darkhorse', 'Colt' and 'Racehorse'.
2. Regardless of the source, once an infestation occurs *Poa trivialis* is difficult to get rid of. There are no selective chemical controls, so renovation following removal with a non-selective herbicide may be the best option.



Roughstalk bluegrass (*Poa trivialis*) is a light green, cool-season turfgrass that spreads by lateral creeping stems called stolons. Adapted to wet, shaded areas, it may be planted as a desirable turfgrass in such sites. However, it can become a significant weed problem in sunny sites where it thins out and turns brown

during summer drought. In wet years it appears as puffy patches that are prone to scalping. Introduction of *Poa trivialis* could be the result of contaminated seed, native plants, or from dormant seeds or stolons in the soil that reestablish under favorable growing conditions.

• SUPINA BLUEGRASS •

Of note...

1. Common on sports fields in Europe, it is not widely used in the U.S.
2. It is lighter green than most varieties of Kentucky bluegrass and perennial ryegrass and will be visible in a mixed stand.
3. Excessive thatch will develop if not managed properly.
4. Does best at lower mow heights, 0.75 - 1.5".
5. Improved varieties include Supra and Supranova.



Supina bluegrass (*Poa supina*) is a cool-season species with aggressive stoloniferous growth. It is adapted to moist, cool climates and has excellent traffic tolerance and good shade tolerance. These characteristics make it an option for athletic fields, particularly if they are in shady sites. Seed is

expensive and may be prohibitive for seeding 100% *Poa supina*. However, it can be included at rates between 5 - 25% (by weight) as part of a mixture with Kentucky bluegrass, perennial ryegrass, or both. Properly managed, the aggressive growth habit of *Poa supina* will eventually dominate the stand.

• ANNUAL BLUEGRASS •

Of note...

1. Annual bluegrass is a prolific producer of seed, even under extremely low mowing heights.

2. Thrives in cool weather, but dies back under summer stress times of heat and drought.

3. While rarely planted on purpose in northern climates, seed is available.



Annual bluegrass (*Poa annua*) is a widely distributed cool-season grass that is considered a weed in most turf situations. It often becomes a significant part, or even the primary species, in turf stands. Difficult to control once it becomes established, turfgrass professionals may have no choice but to manage it as a desirable species. *Poa*

annua var. *reptans* is a perennial-type that persists under close mowing and frequent irrigation and is more commonly found in golf turf. Perennial-types are sometimes called creeping bluegrass. There are improved varieties of creeping bluegrass available, including 'Two-Putt'.

Of note...

1. Native to southeast Asia, zoysiagrass was introduced to the United States in 1895.
2. It is well-adapted to the transition zone and deep south where it is used in residential and commercial landscapes, athletic fields and golf course tees, fairways and roughs.
3. *Zoysia japonica*, also called Japanese or Korean lawngrass, is the mostly widely used species in the US.
4. *Zoysia matrella*, also called manilagrass, is less cold tolerant and slower growing than *zoysia japonica*.

• ZOYSIAGRASS •



Zoysiagrass (*Zoysia* spp.) is a warm-season perennial turfgrass that spreads by both stolons and rhizomes. It has good traffic and drought tolerance. *Zoysia japonica* is winter hardy, but not recommended due to its prolonged dormancy in our relatively short growing season. Zoysiagrass goes dormant with

the first frost and remains dormant until well into the spring. It is usually established by sprigs, plugs or sod. Seed is available for some varieties, but germination and establishment is slow. Improved varieties of *Zoysia japonica* include 'Meyer', 'Compadre', 'SR 9200' and 'Zenith'.

REFERENCES

Bonos, S.A., W.A. Meyer and J.A. Murphy. 2000. Classification of Kentucky bluegrass genotypes grown as spaced-plants. HortScience 35:910-913.

Bremer, D., J. Lewis, S. Keeley and J. Fry. 2012. Effects of wilt-based irrigation on visual quality and seasonal water applications on 30 bluegrasses in the transition zone. USGA Turfgrass and Environmental Research Online (TERO) 11(6): 1-12.

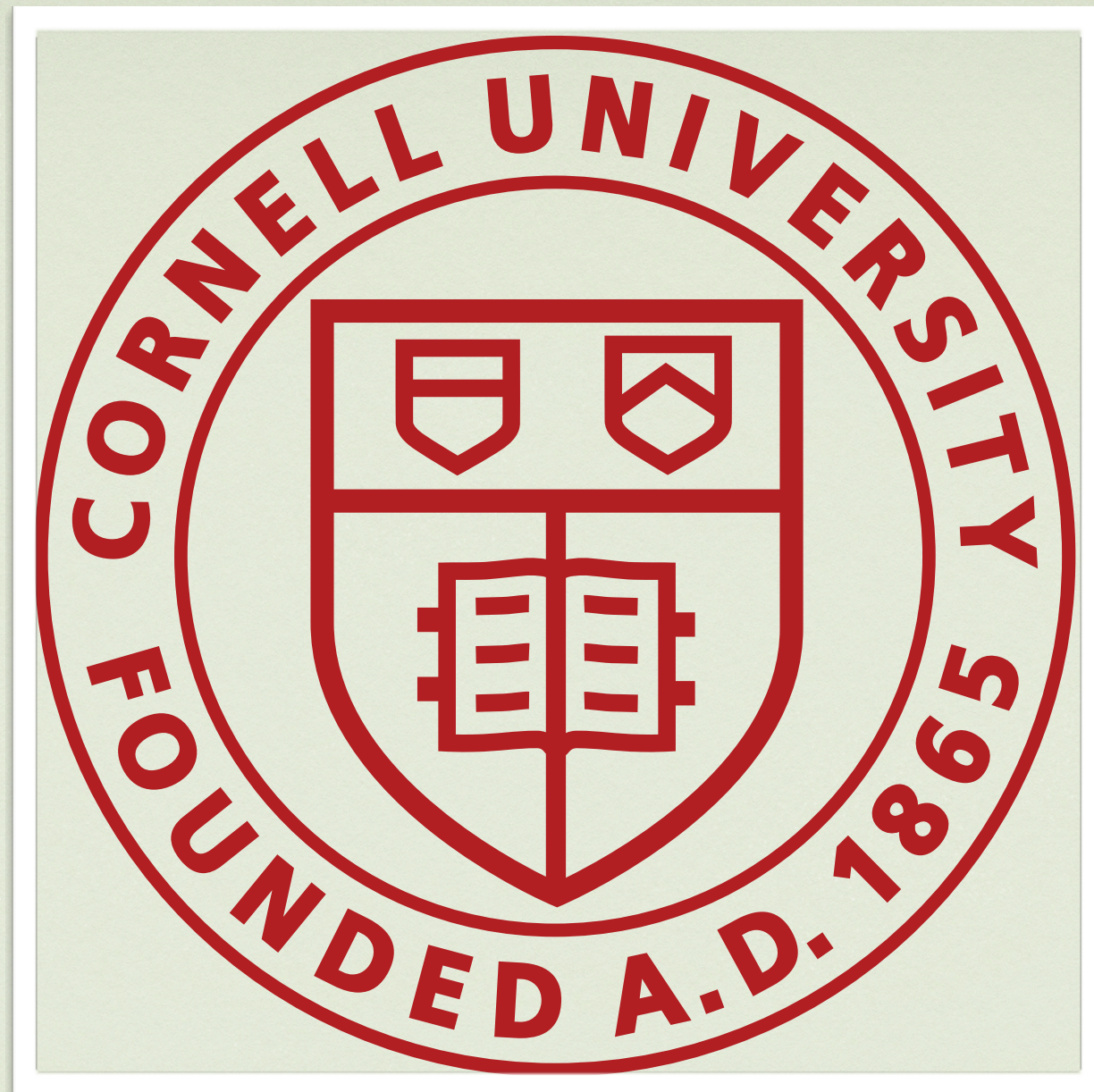
Emmons, R. and F.S. Rossi. 2016. Turfgrass Science and Management, 5th Edition. Independence, KY: Cengage Learning.

Gussack, E. and F.S. Rossi. 2001. Turfgrass Problems: Picture Clues and Management Options. Ithaca, NY: NRAES (now known as PALS).

National Turfgrass Evaluation Program (www.ntep.org), Beltsville, MD.

New York State Turfgrass Survey 2003. Albany, NY: New York Agricultural Statistics Service.

Rossi, R.S. 2001. 2001-2003 Turfgrass Species and Variety Guidelines for New York State. Cornell Cooperative Extension Publication 141IB247.



© Cornell University

2015