

Wireweed, yarrow and yorkshire fog

Wireweed (*Polygonum aviculare*)

Summary

Widespread annual.

Identification

Has a prostrate growth habit. Its stems are tough and branch up to 150 cm long. Small leaves are always green and seedlings have semi-erect leaves. It produces small flowers at the base of the leaves that are often hard to notice.

Characteristics

Closely related to willow weed. Establishes in spring, earlier than most summer annuals. Does not persist in a dense pasture sward. Needs good moisture for germination but is tolerant of low temperatures. Very tolerant of treading.



Yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*)

Summary

Widespread, particularly in cooler areas. Perennial.

Identification

Seedlings have finely divided dark green leaves with fine hairs. It spreads from seed and rhizomes often forming extensive matted patches. Each summer it produces new upright stems carrying intensely white flowers.

Characteristics

Yarrow is drought tolerant and stock readily eat it; in earlier times it was sown in pasture.



Yorkshire fog (*Holcus lanatus*)

Summary

Widespread, particularly in poorly drained low pH soils. Perennial.

Identification

Has a soft hairy feel and appearance, and grayish seed heads. Has stems that grow outward across the ground and pink stripes at the base of the plant.

Characteristics

Its merits as a forage plant are much debated. Alternate hard grazing and long spells will reduce its presence in a ryegrass sward.

