

WILD OATS—*Avena Fatua*, L.

Introduced from Europe. Annual, resembles the cultivated oat in general appearance only that it is slightly taller. The panicle is more branching and less coarse and the whole plant is generally covered with a white green bloom which enables one acquainted with the plant to distinguish it from a considerable distance.

The wild oat seed may be known by the two following characteristics: It has a horseshoe shaped scar at the base, sometimes called a sucker mouth, coltsfoot or spoon bill, and there are more or less stiff bristles surrounding the scar. While the oat is attached in the panicle there is present a stiff twisted awn, often bent at right angles, but this is generally broken off in threshing. Following are descriptions of various sorts of wild oats as given in Bulletin No. 2 of Manitoba Agricultural College, Winnipeg. (See cut on page 61.)

"1. Characteristic wild oat, very hairy with right angled awn and pronounced spoon bill.

"2. Only a few hairs at the lower end and more plump, but other characters the same.

"3. Less hairy towards the upper end.

"4. With scarcely any hairs on the main grain and none on the bosom oat.

"5. A similar bosom oat taken from a wild main oat with none of the characteristics of the wild variety.

"6. A brown hairless variety with pronounced spoon bill, but is not at all plump.

"7. A yellowish variety much like No. 6 except in colour.

"8. A white grain, no hairs but quite thin, the awn and bill being well marked.

"9. A plump white grain, with no ordinary characteristics except the spoon bill.

"10. A larger and plumper white grain, very closely resembling abundance oats and presumably a false wild oat."

Wild oats are common all over the province, in fact it is very difficult to find seed oats free from the seed of this weed.

Wild oats will come through 3 to 5 inches of soil and will lie on the ground several years without losing their vitality.

SUGGESTIONS FOR CONTROL.—1. A good summerfallow properly done is a good plan, starting the previous fall by a very shallow ploughing in preference to discing which latter does not frequently cover sufficiently deep to secure a high germination the following spring. Very few of that year's oats will germinate that fall but by the fall ploughing the surface three inches of the soil is put into such a condition as to make possible the germination early in the spring of most of the oats in that portion of the soil. The first two weeks of spring is the ideal time for seed germination, and if no work is done in the fall, these two weeks of spring weather are generally lost. The field should be harrowed or disced every week or ten days until the middle or last of June when it should be well