

Marco A. Pena
Associate in Extension – Weeds/Agronomy
Arizona Cooperative Extension
University of Arizona

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Hare Barley



Hare Barley, Mediterranean or Wall Barley (*Hordeum murinum*) has been increasing at the Yuma Valley and the Mesa. This week we have received samples for ID from our friend PCAs.

It's a cool season annual grass native to Europe with dense stiff awned spikes. Early in the season before the flower spikes develop, they can be a very good forage but when the spikes emerge can injure the mouths, eyes, nasal passages, ears, and skin of animals.

It is found throughout California up to 3300 feet (1000 m) and inhabits agricultural land, disturbed sites, and unmanaged natural areas³. The seedheads are unbranched, awned, stems and leaves are hairless, and the ligules are membranous. The collar region and auricles can be seen in the image below from the University of CA³.

The *Hordeum murinum* complex is the most widespread of all the other *Hordeum* species, and the origin of its distribution was Central Europe, the Mediterranean area, North Africa, and Western Asia¹.



Collar region of (left to right) hare (wild) barley, wheat, and wild oat.
Photo by Jack Kelly Clark³.

References:

1. Retrieved from: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hordeum_murinum
2. https://weeds.nmsu.edu/factsheet.php?weed_id=101
3. https://ipm.ucanr.edu/PMG/WEEDS/hare_barley.html