

### Canada Bluegrass (*Poa compressa*)

C. V. PIPER and R. A. OAKLEY

It does not require a trained botanist to tell the difference between Canada bluegrass (*Poa compressa*) and Kentucky bluegrass (*Poa pratensis*). Color alone is almost sufficient, but there are other and more important distinguishing characters. Canada bluegrass differs in general from Kentucky bluegrass in shape of stem, shape and color of leaves, character of the seed head or panicle, and in its turf-forming habit. The stems or culms of Canada bluegrass are flat or compressed. They bear few leaves, which are of a dark bluish green color and are much shorter than those of Kentucky bluegrass. The panicle is quite compact and is much shorter than that of Kentucky bluegrass. The flat, nearly solid stems are of a character which the layman will find very useful in distinguishing this species from the other grasses commonly found on golf courses.

Canada bluegrass is a very hardy perennial grass which produces an abundance of creeping rootstocks. These make the grass aggressive and enable it to form a tough sod. But the habits of the grass are such as to cause it to produce a thin turf, which is undesirable from a golf standpoint.

Although widely distributed throughout this country and found growing largely in uncultivated areas, Canada bluegrass is an introduced species. Its native home is Europe. However, it was introduced here early in colonial times. Now it is nearly as widely distributed as Kentucky bluegrass, but is neither as plentiful nor as important. It is found in greatest abundance in southern Ontario, but it is very common in the New England states, New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia, Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Illinois and Missouri.

Canada bluegrass will thrive on poor, stiff, clay soils and on poor gravelly soils where Kentucky bluegrass will scarcely succeed. However, it does not do well on sandy soils, and on rich soils it is unable to compete with Kentucky bluegrass. As for its temperature relations, it has a somewhat wider range than Kentucky bluegrass.

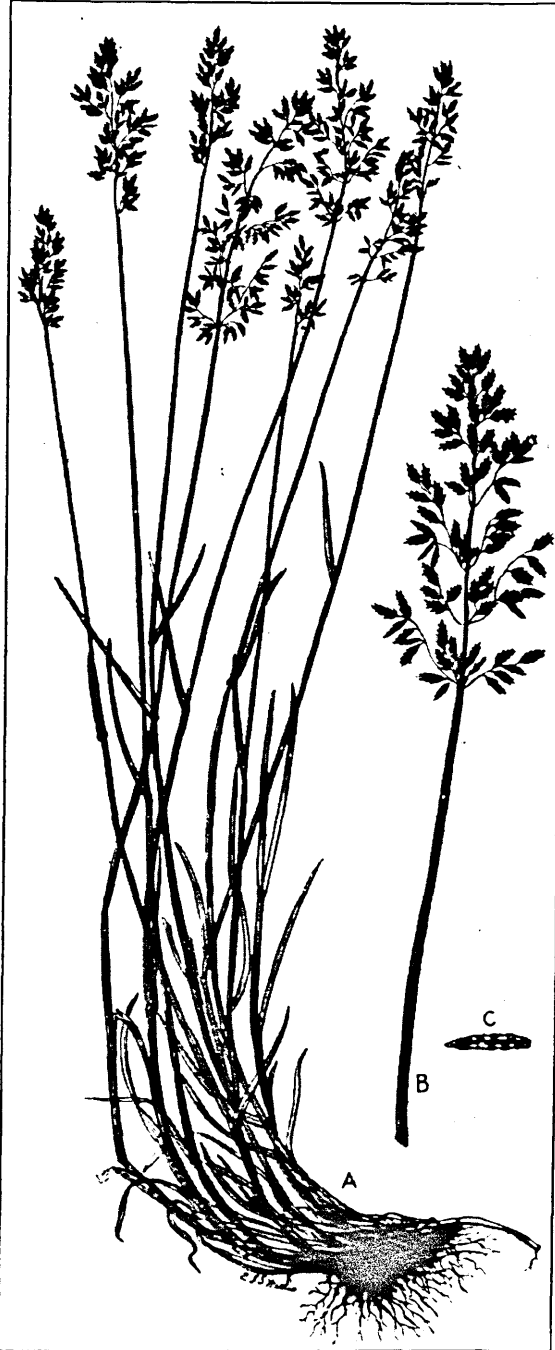
Because of its peculiar habit of growth, which results in the production of thin, stubby turf, Canada bluegrass has no place on putting greens or fairways of golf courses. However, as a grass for the rough, Canada bluegrass is excellent especially as the southern limits of sheep fescue are approached. It offers about the proper penalty to the player and at the same time it does not afford a hiding place for the ball.

As a soil binder on clay banks where the soil is poor, Canada bluegrass may be used very advantageously. As an agricultural species it is by no means without merit. It is very nutritious and is highly regarded as a pasture. It makes excellent hay grass, but does not produce a sufficiently high yield to make it of great importance as a hay grass.

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### Back Numbers of The Bulletin

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Canada bluegrass (*Poa compressa* Linnæus). A, Entire plant, one-half natural size; B, panicle; C, cross section of the stem, showing how it is compressed so as to be two edged.