



Mediterranean needle grass  
*Stipa capensis*  
Grass family (Poaceae)

Bristles  
Pointing upward  
Beginning to bend  
outward

Fig. 1 Young grass  
© Avinoam Danin,  
Flora of Israel Online



Fig. 2 Aging grass  
© Avinoam Danin, Flora of Israel Online

### Quick Reference

Park WATCH list  
Naturalized in the Coachella  
Valley/Sonoran Desert with  
specimens collected near  
the south boundary of JOTR

Winter Annual

Flowering time(s)  
Spring

### Key characteristics

#### Vegetation (Figures All)

- Plant: ages **green** to **tan**; flower heads with **long bristles**; **feathery** looking at maturity
- Stem/Branch: stems **4-12 inches** long
- Leaves: **thin** blades, mostly at **base** of plant, are **2 to 6 inches** long and rolled inward with age; +/- hairy; tips taper to a **sharp point**; one leaf below each flower head

#### Flowers (Figures All)

- Flower heads: individual flowers have **2 to 4 inch bristles**; young flower head is 'needle' like with bristles **pointing upward**, at maturity **twisting** bristles **bend outward**
- Seeds: break apart at maturity

#### Habitat and Distribution

Desert scrub, roadsides, disturbed areas; currently **only in Coachella Valley**; spreads by seed

#### Similar Native Species:



Fig. 3 Dense stand of needle grass  
© Avinoam Danin, Flora of Israel Online

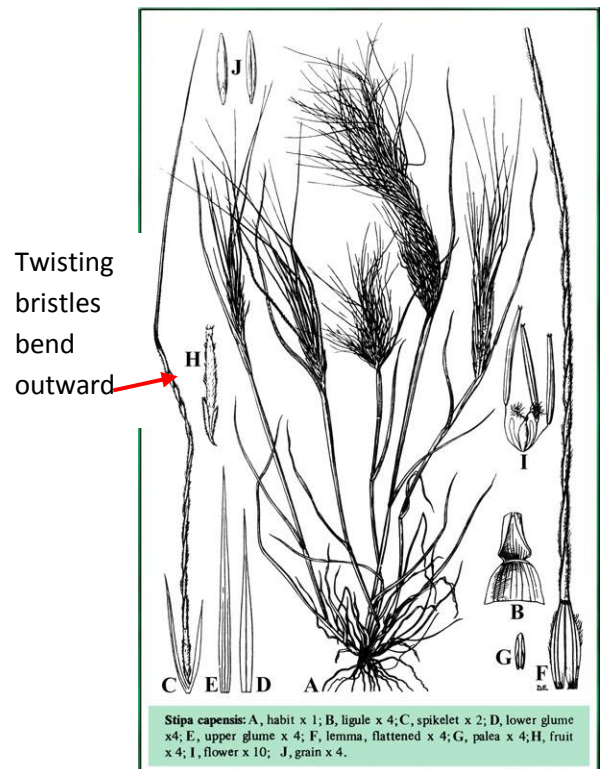


Fig. 4 Illustration

*Stipa capensis*: A, habit x 1; B, ligule x 4; C, spikelet x 2; D, lower glume x 4; E, upper glume x 4; F, lemma, flattened x 4; G, palea x 4; H, fruit x 4; I, flower x 10; J, grain x 4.