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common name	Little Quaking Grass
scientific name	<i>Briza minor</i>
family	Poaceae (grass)
habitat	grassland (moist)
size	plant up to 6 inches tall; florete 3 to 4 mm across
fun facts	The florets of this grass <u>resemble</u> the rattles on the tail of a rattlesnake.

description Member of the grass family. Each grass flower is made up of a pair of tiny bracts, the stamens and pistil. The flowers are grouped into clusters called florets (a cluster of flowers). Because grasses are wind pollinated, they do not need showy flowers to attract insects. In fact, petals could block the wind and prevent pollination.

The rattle-like florets of this plant are distinctive and you are unlikely to confuse it with any other grass.

life cycle Little Quaking Grass is an annual. It germinates over the winter. It blooms in April and May.

ecology Little Quaking Grass is not native in California. Usually non-native plants are considered weedy and bad for the ecosystem. However, this plant is not an aggressive weed and only occurs sparingly. These kinds of non-aggressive, non-native plants are sometimes called naturalized (meaning that they live here in harmony with the native species).

investigate

Each floret of Little Quaking Grass is made up of numerous individual flowers. Can you count the bracts and figure out how many flowers make a floret? Is every floret made up of the same number of flowers?

