

DECLARED PLANT

Buffel grass

Cenchrus ciliaris, *C. pennisetiformis*

Buffel grass is an introduced, summer-growing, perennial pasture grass 0.2-1.5 m high.

It is now declared under the *Landscape South Australia Act 2019*, with prohibition on sale throughout South Australia, enforced control in the Alinytjara Wilurara, Northern and Yorke, and SA Arid Lands NRM regions, and enforced destruction in the remainder of the State.

- **Other common names:** mamu grass, Rhodesian foxtail, African foxtail, black buffel grass, foxtail buffalo grass, blue buffel grass, anjan grass.
- **Synonyms:** *Pennisetum ciliare*, *Pennisetum cenchroides*
- **Origin:** Africa, Asia, Madagascar.

WHY IS IT A PROBLEM?

Buffel grass has spread from planting for pasture, mine rehabilitation and erosion control across much of northern and inland Australia.

- forms dense monocultures that displace native vegetation and cause habitat loss
- competes with other plants for water and nutrients
- forms a continuous, flammable ground layer that can carry hot fires, affecting native flora and fauna, and threatening infrastructure and public safety
- drought and fire resistant, and can withstand heavy grazing.





DESCRIPTION

Habit: erect, tussock-forming, deep rooted grass 0.2 -1.5 m high. **Stems:** grow from a centralised point to form a tuft. **Roots:** deep root system, some with rhizomes up to 50 cm in length. **Leaves:** rough textured due to small stiff hairs, with prominent midribs. Green when actively growing and straw coloured in dry times. Ligule (area where leaf blade diverges from stem) has delicate hairs. **Inflorescence:** spike-like seed heads to 15 cm long containing densely arranged burrs, varying in colour from white to purple. Can appear in all months. Each burr contains 1-3 seeds. **Seed:** small seeds are < 2mm long and can persist in the soil for 5+ years.

HOW IT SPREADS

Buffel grass disperses by burrs containing seeds, which are carried by wind, water, people (pasture sowing and leisure activities), machinery (vehicles, tractors), livestock, birds and other wild animals.

HABITAT

Buffel grass colonises bare or cleared areas in arid and semi-arid areas, on roadsides, railway corridors, pastoral lands, riparian sites and alluvial flats. It grows in a wide range of soils, although soil nutrients have more influence on the ability of buffel grass to establish, preferring medium-high phosphorus and nitrogen levels.

DISTRIBUTION

Found across South Australia in the semi-arid and arid environments, with the highest densities in the north-west. Widespread (from planting) in Western Australia, Northern Territory and Queensland. Also naturalised in New South Wales and Victoria.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Seek control advice if you have this weed. For further information on buffel grass consult the *South Australian Buffel Grass Strategic Plan 2019 - 2024*.

For more information

Contact your local Landscape Board for more information on controlling declared weeds:

www.landscape.sa.gov.au

Further weed control information is also available at:

www.pir.sa.gov.au/biosecurity