

# Coolatai Grass

Coolatai grass (*Hyparrhenia hirta*) is an enduring tussock-forming grass that invades pastures and native vegetation. This weed has the capability to take over undisturbed ecosystems and is a threat in national reserves.

## WHAT IS COOLATAI GRASS?

Coolatai grass is an invasive tussock-forming perennial grass that is drought, fire and herbicide tolerant. It has become a major invasive species, dominating land over a range of soil types and conditions. The abundance of dry stalks and leaf matter are a dangerous fire hazard particularly on roadsides and in urban areas.

It is also one of the few grasses capable of invading roadsides and undisturbed natural ecosystems, outcompeting most other native species and makes it one of the most problematic weeds in the Mid-Western Region.

## HOW TO IDENTIFY

Coolatai Grass is a long-lived summer-active perennial that:

- Produces short rhizomes that form a dense grass tussock and grows to 1.5m in height
- It has greyish-green leaves that turn orangey-red in winter, particularly after frost
- The leaves are harsh to touch. Leaf sheaths are usually hairless and keeled
- The leaf blade is flat and 2-3mm wide, with the ligule 2-3mm long and minutely toothed



## CONTROL AND MANAGEMENT

Coolatai grass can survive fire and regular burning has been shown to have no negative effect. For effective and long term control, land owners will be required to implement various methods of control.

### Identify

Learn to identify and check roadsides leading to your property along which you move stock, vehicles and machinery.



### Early detection

Coolatai grass will usually start with only one or two plants. Physical removal can be done; remove, bag, dispose. A herbicide spot spray should then be carried out on the treated area.



### Prevention methods

Once established, coolatai grass is difficult to control. Avoid travelling through coolatai grass infestations especially when plants are seeding. Ensure machinery, vehicles and clothing are cleaned down after working in a known coolatai grass area.

Land occupiers must ensure stock, machinery and all feed and fodder entering their property have not come into any contact with infested areas. Stock should be held in a quarantine paddock for two weeks before being moved into a clean paddock. The quarantined paddock should then be monitored for any growth.



## CONTROL AND MANAGEMENT

### Physical control

It is essential that coolatai grass not be allowed to set seed. Mowing, slashing and strategic grazing can reduce or prevent seed set. Small infestations should be grubbed out and material appropriately disposed.



### Biological control

There are currently no known biological control agents being investigated to assist in the control of coolatai grass. For more advice on recognising and controlling coolatai grass, contact Council.



### Chemical control

Glyphosate and Flupropanate may be applied to actively growing plants to aid control of coolatai grass. Infestations may need to be slashed, mowed or burnt to remove old growth material and stimulate new active growth. Several applications may be required to achieve control of coolatai grass.



## YOUR RESPONSIBILITY

Landowners under the Biosecurity Act 2015 have a General Biosecurity Duty (GBD) are expected to, within reason, know about any weeds which may impact their land.

### Regional Recommended Measure – CONTAINMENT

Land managers should mitigate the risk of the plant being introduced to their land. Land managers should mitigate the spread of the plant from their land. A person should not buy, sell, move, carry or release the plant into the environment. Land managers should reduce the impact of the plant on assets of high economic, environmental and/or social value.

## GET THE FREE WEEDS APP

NSW Department of Primary Industries have developed an app that provides key information to help users reduce the impact of over 320 weeds in NSW, called NSW WeedWise.

Users can search or browse weed names (common or scientific), recognise a weed by its physical description and image gallery, and find out about its impacts, where it occurs, how it spreads and its preferred habitat.



NSW WeedWise is a free smartphone app available through app stores.



Images: NSW DPI

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

Visit Council's website [midwestern.nsw.gov.au](http://midwestern.nsw.gov.au), or the NSW DPI website [www.dpi.nsw.gov.au](http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au) and search 'weeds'. Council's Weeds Team are available to assist on 6378 2939 or at [weeds.admin@midwestern.nsw.gov.au](mailto:weeds.admin@midwestern.nsw.gov.au).

### DISCLAIMER

The information contained in this fact sheet is general in nature and should not be relied upon as the complete source of information to be considered. This document is not intended as a substitute for consulting relevant legislation or for obtaining appropriate professional advice relevant to your particular circumstances.

References: NSW DPI, [www.herbiguide.com.au](http://www.herbiguide.com.au)