

Regional Priority Weed

Coolatai Grass

Hyparrhenia hirta

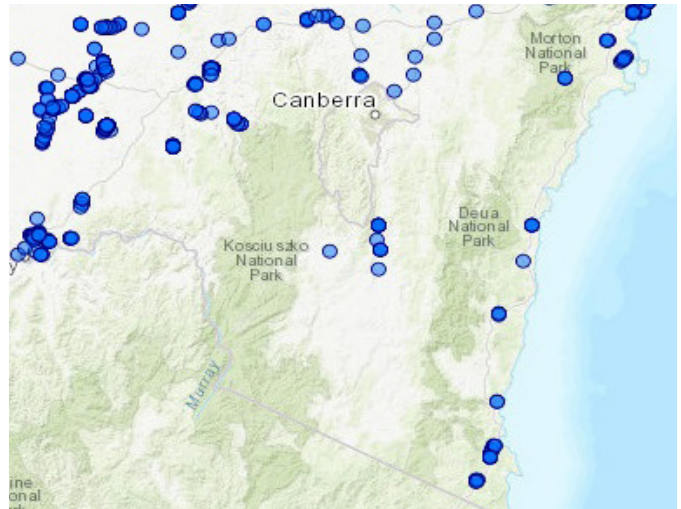
Coolatai grass is a priority weed in the South East region. Infestations must be controlled and not allowed to spread. Suspected sightings should be reported to Council.

Help us find and control this invasive weed.

Why is Coolatai grass a problem?

Coolatai grass is an invasive drought, fire, and herbicide tolerant tussock forming perennial grass that readily invades weak pastures on light soils. In tablelands, it grows prolifically through the summer months and goes dormant over winter, leaving behind a tall thatch of highly flammable growth. Coolatai grass typically has low digestibility and protein levels, making it a poor pasture species. It is also one of the few perennial grasses capable of invading undisturbed natural ecosystems and is a major threat to natural biodiversity in stock routes, nature reserves and National Parks.

Coolatai grass spreads by seed which may be transported by wind, water, animals or vehicles but mature plants produce a low amount of seed compared to many other grass weeds and seedlings are susceptible to frost and cold temperatures. These characteristics make Coolatai grass vulnerable at the early stages of invasion on the Monaro so any suspected infestations should be reported to Council and controlled as soon as possible to exploit this vulnerability.



Above: Recorded distribution of Coolatai grass in south east NSW.



Above: Coolatai grass grows in dense tussocks to 1.5 m tall.

For information on how to identify and control weeds contact the Biosecurity team.

24/7 Customer service line

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IDENTIFYING FEATURES

Coolatai grass can be identified by the following features:

- Grey-green leaves that turn orangey-red in winter, particularly after frost.
- Leaves are harsh to touch. Leaf sheaths are usually hairless and keeled.
- The leaf blade is flat and 2-3 mm wide with the ligule 2-3 mm long and minutely toothed.
- The seedhead is distinctive with multiple pairs of racemes. These form a V shape with each 'arm' being 3-4 cm long.
- It may be confused with kangaroo grass when not in seed but Coolatai is more clumpy/tussock forming.



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CONTROLLING COOLATAI GRASS

- Given its limited distribution in the area the primary method of control for Coolatai grass is prevention. Land managers should ensure stock, fodder, grain and machinery coming onto their land is free of Coolatai grass seeds.
- Learn to identify Coolatai grass and contact Council for assistance with identification if you suspect you've found some.
- Where Coolatai grass has been identified it should be treated with herbicides with up to three applications of glyphosate in the same growing season required. The repeat application should be timed for when there is sufficient regrowth of fresh leaves.
- If seed production has commenced prior to detection, seed heads should be cut off and contained in a sturdy plastic bag and appropriately disposed of. Bins for disposing of priority weeds are available at Council's landfill sites.

CHEMICAL CONTROL OPTIONS

WARNING: Always read the label and any applicable permit before opening and using herbicides.

Herbicides are most effective when incorporated into an integrated weed management plan. The following chemicals and rates are provided as a guide only. See NSW Weedwise for more options. Seek expert advice before commencing broadacre control as optimal herbicide rates can vary significantly depending on soil types and pasture conditions.

Product trade names are supplied on the understanding that no preference between equivalent products is implied, and the inclusion of a product does not imply endorsement by SMRC over any other equivalent product from another manufacturer.

Chemical	Rate	Comments
Glyphosate 360 g/L (Various products) APVMA Permit 9792 Expires 30/11/2025	2L per 100L water	Apply herbicide solution to the point of run-off from leaf surfaces using high volume spot spray applicators.
Glyphosate 360 g/L + Flupropanate 745 g/L (Various products) APVMA Permit 9792 Expires 30/11/2025	2L glyphosate + 200 mL flupropanate per 100L water	Spot spray actively growing plants before flowering. This herbicide mixture is most effective between July and October. Only use the tank mix once per season.
Flupropanate 745 g/L (Various products)	300 mL per 100 L water	High volume spot spray applicators. Apply to the point of run-off from leaf surfaces in winter and spring between July and October.

NSW WeedWise can be accessed as web pages or as a smartphone app

