

Para grass

Urochloa mutica



Para grass is a common weed in many sugarcane growing areas. It has been used in tropical locations as a fodder species, especially as a ponded pasture in beef production.

Para grass can be a very aggressive invader, particularly in low-lying ungrazed areas and in sugar cane crops. Para grass is often found in wet situations, especially drains, but will also grow in deep soils in non-swampy areas. The ability to thrive in wet areas highlights this species as a potential threat to natural wetland ecosystems. Native plants are significantly displaced by the vigorous growth of this weed. Para grass also invades areas of disturbed remnant vegetation on suitable soils.

Legal requirements

Para grass is not a prohibited or restricted invasive plant under the *Biosecurity Act 2014*. However, by law, everyone has a general biosecurity obligation (GBO) to take reasonable and practical steps to minimise the risks associated with invasive plants under their control.

Local governments must have a biosecurity plan that covers invasive plants in their area. This plan may include actions to be taken on certain species. Some of these actions may be required under local laws. Contact your local government for more information.



Description

Para grass is a perennial grass up to about 1 m tall. The stems are hollow and robust, creeping in a prostrate growth habit. Stems stand erect towards the ends, and sprout new roots wherever the nodes touch the ground. Leaf blades are hairy and dark green in colour. They are usually up to 15 cm long and less than 1 cm wide, tapering to a long, fine point. The leaf sheaths are also hairy, particularly where they join the stem. Flower heads are up to 18 cm long and are made up of several spikes, each about 5 cm long. Seeds cluster thickly along each of these spikes, although para grass seldom sets seed in southern Queensland.

Control

Grazing para grass prevents it dominating other vegetation.

Two herbicides are registered for use in non-crop situations, but only certain formulations of glyphosate can be used around water. In addition fluzifop may be used in certain situations under minor use permit APVMA permit PER11463 (expires 30/06/2023).

Various products are registered for use in cropping or orchard situations. Consult Biosecurity Queensland or your advisory service for further information.

If treating para grass in an aquatic situation, be sure to only use products registered for that particular use. Not in waterways deeper than 60 cm.

Further information

Further information is available from your local government office, or by contacting Biosecurity Queensland on 13 25 23 or visit biosecurity.qld.gov.au.

Table 1. Herbicides for the control of para grass

Situation	Herbicide	Rate	Comments
Non-agricultural areas around buildings, commercial and industrial areas, domestic and public service areas, rights-of-way	Glyphosate 360 g/L and other formulations	200 mL per 15 L water	Knapsack handgun
		1.3 L per 100 L water	Boom
		9 L per ha For other formulations, consult label for correct rate	Foliar application Apply to actively growing plants at the early head stage. When spraying around water, use only formulations registered for aquatic use, and follow label instructions carefully. Do not apply to weeds growing over water. Do not allow water to return to dry channels and drains within four days of application. Do not spray across open bodies of water and do not allow spray to enter the water.
Commercial and industrial areas, rights-of-way, around agricultural buildings	Bromacil 800 g/kg (e.g Bromacil 800WP)	8–13 kg/ha	The lowest rate will provide control in low rainfall areas. Use a wetting agent. Consult label for details.
Non-agricultural areas, domestic and public service areas, commercial and industrial areas, bushland/native forests, roadsides, rights-of-way, vacant lots, wastelands, wetlands, dunal and coastal areas	Fluzifop-P 212 g/L (e.g. Fusilier)	2–4 L/ha	High volume foliar spray
		400 mL/100 L water	Spot spray Actively growing plants, at 5 leaf to early tillering. Use higher rate for well established infestations. PER11463. Read permit carefully.

Read the label carefully before use. Always use the herbicide in accordance with the directions on the label.

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Fact sheets are available from Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (DAF) service centres and our Customer Service Centre (telephone 13 25 23). Check our website at biosecurity.qld.gov.au to ensure you have the latest version of this fact sheet. The control methods referred to in this fact sheet should be used in accordance with the restrictions (federal and state legislation, and local government laws) directly or indirectly related to each control method. These restrictions may prevent the use of one or more of the methods referred to, depending on individual circumstances. While every care is taken to ensure the accuracy of this information, DAF does not invite reliance upon it, nor accept responsibility for any loss or damage caused by actions based on it.

