

GRASSES

Austrodanthonia caespitosa (Poaceae)
(syn. *Rytidosperma caespitosum*)

Common Wallaby-grass

Size: Stems to 1.2m high.

Flowering: October-January.

Habitat: Grassy wetland, plains grassland, sclerophyll forest and tea-tree heath.

Description: Variable perennial grass often forming a dense tussock. Blue/green flat or loosely rolled leaves and flower panicles usually oblong to 15cm. Widespread, common and often a dominant species of the ground flora. Mature flower heads appear bleached and fluffy. Requires moist well-drained soils.

Propagation: By seed or by division.



GRASSES

Austrostipa flavescens (Poaceae)

Coast Spear-grass

Size: Flower stems to 1.2m.

Flowering: September to February.

Habitat: Frontline coastal dune scrub in well-drained sandy soils.

Description: Open, tufted grass with dense narrow many-flowered panicle to 40 cm long with erect branches. Useful grass for frontline coastal planting, tolerant of salt spray.

Propagation: Sow clean seed with no treatment required.



GRASSES

Elymus scaber var. *scaber* (Poaceae)

Common Wheat-grass

Size: 20cm high with stems to 80cm.

Flowering: October-January.

Habitat: Widespread throughout plains grassland and dry sclerophyll forests.

Description: Open-tufted perennial grass with slender erect or drooping flower stems often for several metres in some forms. Flat green or bluish leaves to 80cm tapering to

a fine point with rough upper surfaces. Spikes are slender with 1-10 large 6-12 flowered spikelets. Adaptable to all well-drained soils.

Propagation: By seed.



GRASSES

Lachnogrostis billardierei subsp. *billardierei* (Poaceae)

Coast Blown-grass

(syn. *Agrostis billardierei*)

Size: To 15cm high.

Flowering: October-February.

Habitat: Primary dune scrub and riparian scrub.

Description: Annual grass with flat linear leaves to 20cm long. Produces a very loose, spreading straw colored panicle to 30cm long. Usually confined to the coast.

Propagation: By seed.



GRASSES

Microlaena stipoides var. *stipoides* (Poaceae)

Weeping Grass

Size: Highly variable 30-60cm.

Flowering: September-November.

Habitat: Widespread in woodlands, riparian & tea-tree scrubs, grasslands and sclerophyll forests.

Description: Sparse perennial grass with graceful arching stems and flat narrow leaves. Flowers are narrow spikelets to 30mm long on slender stems. One of the best lawn grasses for shady areas which does best on moist well-drained soils.

Propagation: By seed.



GRASSES

Phragmites australis (Poaceae)

Common Reed

Size: 1-3metres high.

Flowering: January-April.

Habitat: Riparian and swamp scrub and coastal woodlands.

Description: Semi-aquatic, fast growing bamboo-like perennial grass with creeping rhizomes. Glabrous grey-green leaves tapering to a fine point and white to purplish plume-like flower panicles to 40cm long. An attractive water-side plant that does well in wet, poorly drained soils but will take over if not contained. Provides food and valuable habitat.

Propagation: By division or seed.



GRASSES

Poa labillardierei (Poaceae)

Common Tussock-grass

Size: Flower spikes to 1.3m.

Flowering: October - February.

Habitat: Widespread in woodlands, plains grasslands and sclerophyll forests on wetter sites.

Description: A tall dense perennial tussock with large rough leaves, and flower spikes are an open pyramid-shaped panicle to 25 cm long.

A very vigorous grass that has many forms and colors, so particularly important to get the correct provenance for revegetation projects. Adapts to most moist or slightly dry soils.

Propagation: Surface sow seed, which has a good to high germination rate in 2-3 weeks. Seed has a medium seed-life. Suitable for direct seeding.

Below: Rare Volcanic Plains form photographed at the Maam Water Reserve, Allansford.



GRASSES

Poa poiformis var. *poiformis* (Poaceae)

Blue Tussock-grass

Size: 90cm x 1m.

Flowering: September-January.

Habitat: Primary dune scrub and coastal woodlands.

Description: Densely tufting grass with rigidly erect bluish leaves about as long as the flowering stems. Forms dense panicles of flowers with large, pale green to straw colored spikelets.

Requires well-drained soil, tolerating saline soil and salt spray. Can be difficult to distinguish from some coastal forms of *P. labillardierei* but you usually can by the proximity to the ocean, flower stem height relative to the leaves and compactness of seed heads.

Propagation: Surface sow seed, which has a good to high germination rate in 2 -3 weeks. Seed has a medium seed-life. Suitable for direct seeding.

Photos: J. Honan.



GRASSES

Spinifex sericeus (Poaceae)
(syn. *Spinifex hirsutus*)

Hairy Spinifex

Size: To 50 cm high.

Flowering: September-
January.

Habitat: Occurs on most
Victorian sandy coasts.

Description: Stout, long
creeping dioecious perennial
with soft hairy, silvery foliage.
An attractive grass that is
effective in stabilizing sand
dunes. Female inflorescence
(above) forms an almost
spherical head, often break
ing loose and rolling along
with the wind. (Right: male
flower)

Propagation: Grown by seed,
which does not have a dor
mancy although it will not germinate
in the presence of light. Sow in a
dark site or give a thick cover.



GRASSES

Themeda triandra (Poaceae)
(syn. *Themeda australis*)

Kangaroo Grass

Size: To 1m high.

Flowering: October - November.

Habitat: One of the most common, widespread and conspicuous grasses in Australia, found mainly in grasslands, woodlands and open forests.

Description: Kangaroo grass is a drought-resistant, deep-rooted, erect tussock forming perennial grass with stalked clusters of green and purple flower heads, which turn rusty brown when ripe.

Propagation: Seed has an after-ripening period that varies depending on where the seed was collected. With seed collected from coastal areas only 20% of seed will be dormant. However with seed from inland areas up to 80% of seed can be dormant and require storage for 12 months. Non-dormant seed should germinate in 2-3 weeks if sown over the warmer months. Suitable for direct seeding.

