

● Pampas (*Cortaderia jubata* and *Cortaderia selloana*)

Introduction

Pampas is a tall perennial tussock grass, which forms large clumps. Two species have been introduced to New Zealand: *Cortaderia jubata* and *Cortaderia selloana*, both are invasive weeds. Pampas has become common throughout the Bay of Plenty in a wide range of habitats, including roadsides, waste areas, cliffs, coastal areas, riverbanks and forest margins. It competes with native vegetation and provides habitat for rats, mice, possums and rabbits; and the build up of dead leaves inside the clumps is a fire hazard. The pest plant pampas should not be confused with the native species of *Cortaderia* called Toetoe (see differences at the end of this fact sheet).

Pest Plant Status

In the Bay of Plenty region, both species of pampas are classified as **Regional Surveillance Pest Plants**. (Refer Environment Bay of Plenty's Regional Pest Management Strategy.)

Land occupiers are not required to control pampas but are encouraged to do so and may receive assistance from Environment Bay of Plenty by way of approved programmes.

Pampas is banned from sale, propagation and distribution in New Zealand.

Origin

Pampas is a native of South America and was introduced to New Zealand as a shelter plant and as a source of fodder for stock.

It has also been used as an ornamental plant. It is now well established throughout the North Island and northern parts of the South Island.



Pampas (Cortaderia jubata)

Description

Both species of pampas are similar in appearance, with dark green, sharp, drooping leaf blades up to two metres long in large clumps. The feathery flowers are borne on long erect stalks and are variably coloured from creamy white to violet, drying to a dirty brown.

C. selloana is more common in most areas. Its flower heads can reach a height of six metres. It flowers from March to late May and has either female or hermaphrodite (male and female) flowers. Female plants are pollinated by the hermaphrodite plants.

C. jubata is smaller, with flowerheads reaching three

metres. It flowers from February to March. Unusually, all flowers are female and set seed without the need for pollination.

Invasion

Pampas plants are able to produce up to 100,000 seeds per flowerhead. The seeds are very small and dispersed over long distances by wind. They will generally only establish on bare or disturbed ground and do not survive long in the soil. Pampas competes very successfully with other vegetation and develops into dense colonies on suitable sites. It is able to tolerate dry, moist and saline conditions. It is also a problem in plantation forests where it impedes forest management activities.

Control Methods

When working amongst pampas plants, it is wise to wear protective clothing, including gloves, as the finely serrated edges of the leaves can inflict severe cuts to the skin. Before any control is attempted, make sure you have identified the plant carefully and that it is not one of the native species.

Manual Pulling

Small plants can be pulled or dug out, ensuring that all the root crown is removed. Dispose of the plants safely, either by burning or in an approved landfill.

Burning

Owing to the large amount of dead material that accumulates inside the clumps, large pampas plants burn readily. However, re-growth may occur, which may then be sprayed while still small.

Care must be taken when burning to avoid fire spreading. Always obtain a fire permit from the local authority beforehand.

Herbicide

Herbicides that effectively control grasses will generally control pampas.

- **Velpar 20G®** (granules)
Use a granule applicator to apply about 3 grams to the ground around the plant.
Use with caution: as Velpar remains active in the soil for a long time and it may be leached into the root zone of nearby desirable plants, especially those downslope.

- **Gallant NF®**
Knapsack: Use 150 ml / 10 litres water plus 50 ml Uptake crop oil.
Handgun: Use 500 ml / 100 litres water plus 500 ml Uptake crop oil.
- **Glyphosate** (e.g. Roundup®):
Knapsack: Use 100 ml / 10 litres water.
Handgun: Use 1 litre / 100 litres water. Ensure complete wetting of the foliage.

CAUTION: When using any herbicide READ THE LABEL thoroughly. Follow all instructions and safety requirements.



New Zealand native Toetoe (*Cortaderia fulvida*)

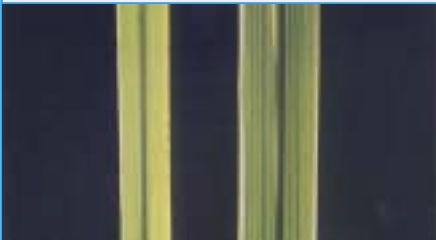

Information in this fact sheet regarding herbicides does not necessarily appear on the labels of the products concerned.

Environment Bay of Plenty does not accept liability for any damage that may arise from use of chemicals at non standard rates. Mention of product trade names implies neither endorsement of those products nor criticism of similar products not mentioned.

Toetoe

There are three species of native toetoe, which are common in the Bay of Plenty: *Cortaderia toetoe*, *C. splendens*, and *C. fulvida*. Toetoe belong to the same family, *Cortaderia*, as pampas. Toetoe have a similar habitat range to that of pampas so they can be easily confused.

Differing characteristics of pampas and toetoe

Pampas flower between February and May.	Toetoe flower between October and February.
Pampas have erect flower stalks.	Toetoe often, but not always, have drooping flower stalks and flower heads.
Pampas flowers range in colour from creamy white to violet.	Toetoe flowers are a light, golden yellow.
Pampas have smooth or slightly hairy leaf bases.	Toetoe have leaf bases with a white, waxy surface.
Pampas leaves have indistinct secondary veins but a prominent midrib.	Toetoe leaves have distinct secondary veins between the midrib and the leaf edge.
Pampas leaves curl into spirals as they die.	Toetoe leaves droop as they die.
	
Leaf blades of pampas (left) and toetoe (right). Note the fine secondary veins parallel to the midrib which are a characteristic feature of toetoe.	Leaf bases of pampas (left) and toetoe (right). Note the white, waxy surface on the leaf bases of all the native species but not pampas.



For further information and advice, contact your local pest plant officer at Environment Bay of Plenty:

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This fact sheet was prepared by Environment Bay of Plenty's Pest Plant Section

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