



## Weed Alert - Have you seen this plant? Tussock paspalum *Paspalum quadrifarium*

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Tussock paspalum, *Paspalum quadrifarium*, is a recent invader to the Snowy Mountain sub alpine areas of Tumut Shire and Tumbarumba Shire. This unpalatable tussock has been recently discovered in large clumps up to 100 metres span on roadsides, as well as individual clumps.



Roadside infestation of tussock paspalum, *Paspalum quadrifarium*, often overlooked as just another roadside grass. Image: Mel Wilkerson.

Although the plant does not key out easily on the standard weed keys, it was readily identified by the state herbarium. After confirmation of the weed's identity. A general notification to landholders was made in an effort to identify, control and, hopefully eradicate this weed. If nothing is done the weed has the potential to pose a serious threat to local graziers as it is a well known menace to graziers in other areas.

Tussock paspalum is often referred to by its common names of blue grass, giant paspalum, golden-top grass, paspalum, and tussock paspalum.

The plant has been classed as naturalised in some parts of eastern Australia (i.e. south-eastern Queensland, some parts of eastern New South Wales and southern Victoria).

The plant is generally found in warmer-temperate, sub-tropical and tropical regions mainly on disturbed sites, rainforests, closed forests, open woodlands and forest margins. This highly invasive species often establishes on road edges and in other disturbed sites, such as along drainage lines. It spreads from these areas into nearby bushland and along waterways. Tussock paspalum grows in large clumps up to one square metre in size and puts pressure on bushland integrity and native species biodiversity. Once established, it has the ability to form extremely dense infestations that out-compete all other vegetation.

It is relatively easy to identify being a large tussock-forming long-lived grass growing up to 2 m tall. It has long and narrow leaves with the sheaths and blades mostly hairless. Where the leaf sheath meets the blade there is a small membranous structure about 1-4 mm long. The seed heads are usually 10-25 cm long with anywhere from 15-25 branches, each bearing numerous small flower spikelets. These flower spikelets are borne in four rows along the seed head branches and turn golden brown in colour as they mature. The seeds are easily dispersed by water, animals, vehicles and other machinery.

**If you do find what you suspect is a tussock paspalum plant or infestation report it to your local council.**

### Further Information:

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Coastal morning glory *Ipomoea carnea*