

Elephant grass (*Pennisetum purpureum*)



Elephant grass is big, growing in thick clumps



Tawny to purple-tinged bristly flower spikes

Elephant grass is a large perennial grass that can grow 3 or more metres high. The leaves are susceptible to frost, but the underground parts can remain alive if the soil is not frozen. It tolerates drought, flooding and fire and prefers rich, well-drained soils.

Elephant grass is big, growing in thick clumps, with long flat leaves with strongly ridged midribs. From mid-summer through to mid-winter the tawny to purple-tinged bristly flower spikes appear, each 14 cm long by 2cm across. The grass grows easily from rhizome and stem fragments.

Elephant grass can be removed mechanically or treated with herbicide.

Elephant grass is only found in a few places in Northland. Any new infestations should be reported to your Regional Council who can give advice on control methods.