

Purple pampas grass (*Cortaderia jubata*)



Dark green leaves and purple flower heads

Purple pampas grass is a very tall grass (up to 3 m tall) with large, fluffy seed heads. It is related to and resembles pampas grass and the native toetoe. It is widespread on roadsides, in waste places, scrubland and in pine plantations.

The leaves of purple pampas grass are dark green on both surfaces and the leaf sheaths of mature plants have long hairs. Purple pampas grass tends to be smaller than pampas grass and it has bright purple flowers that appear between January and March, and then fade to a dirty brown. The seeds are spread by wind, water and people.

Small plants should be grubbed, and larger ones dug out. Cattle will graze purple pampas grass. Plants can be controlled with herbicide applied by weed-wiper or sprayer. Better control can be given by slashing large plants or dense stands and spraying the re-growth.

Pampas grass and purple pampas grass are both unwanted pest plants. There are several native species of toetoe, whose flower heads are golden and appear in the spring (September to January).

In addition:

- toetoe leaves don't snap off easily when tugged, pampas grass leaves do
- toetoe leaf midribs continue into the leaf sheath, pampas grass ones don't
- the dead leaves of toetoe do not spiral like wood shavings, pampas grass ones do

Contact your Regional Council for advice on control methods.