

Please call 1-866-invader if you suspect you have found this species

Common cordgrass
Spartina anglica

Other common names: Townsend's grass, ricegrass

USDA symbol: SPAN5

ODA rating: A and T



Introduction *Spartina anglica* is a hybrid cross between two other *Spartina* species: *S. maritima* and *S. alterniflora*. The original cross is thought to have occurred in Hampshire, Britain around 1870. In 1961 or 1962 the U.S. Department of Agriculture and Washington State University introduced what they thought were sterile *S. x townsendii* plants to the Stillaguamish estuary in Port Susan Bay to provide cattle forage. The population dispersed along the coast of Washington and British Columbia. It is now known the plants were actually the fertile *S. anglica* (Washington Noxious Weed Board).

Distribution in Oregon: This plant is not known to exist in Oregon.

Description: Cordgrasses are salt-tolerant perennial grasses, growing in estuaries worldwide. Common cordgrass grows 1 to 4 feet tall with flat leaf blades and margins, loosely in-rolled at tip. They are ¼ to ½ inch wide at base. Leaf blades project at a 40-80° angle to the stem. Stem Internodes are fleshy; inflorescence's slightly open; branching loosely erect to ascending and loosely overlapping. Fleshy rhizomes are long making manual removal difficult. Common cordgrass has characteristics similar to other cordgrasses, therefore a detailed plant identification key is recommended for positive identification. Common cordgrass has not been identified in Oregon.

Impacts: Cordgrasses are coastal grass species inhabiting salt marsh and mud flat habitats. Each plant can develop into a large, circular clonal patch, many meters in diameter. Eventually the patches coalesce, converting open mudflats to upland marsh. The loss of these mudflats has a great impact on commercial shellfish production, migratory birds and habitat for many species of commercial and non-commercially valuable invertebrates.

Biological controls: Biological control agents are not used on "A" listed weeds in Oregon. If this weed is found in the state, it will be targeted for eradication or containment.

