

# Spartina

(*Spartina alterniflora*, *S. anglica*, *S. x townsendii*)

## Is Spartina on your property?

Spartina is included in Horizon's Regional Pest Plant Management Strategy as a Surveillance plant. This means that Horizons will fund a region-wide programme to search for and control new incursions that pose a threat to production and natural areas. If you see any sites of infestation please contact us on free phone 0508 800 800.



## Identification

Only grass species found in inter-tidal zone. A perennial clump-forming grass growing to 1 m. Stems are erect, with many brownish leaf sheaths. Spartina also possesses rhizomes and fibrous roots. Leaves alternate – deeply wide-ribbed on upper surface. Seedheads occasionally seen, occasionally produced.

## Weedy characteristics

Traps sediment by forming dense clumps. Very tolerant of all weather and temperature conditions. Also to fire, grazing and damage. Rhizomes spread slowly. Their broken fragments will resprout readily. Able to colonise bare intertidal zones.

## Methods of dispersal

By livestock, nets, tidal and current movement, intentional planting. Dispersal over long distances with tendency to survive long-term sea journeys.

## Impact on indigenous plants

Traps sediment to destroy inter-tidal zone and habitats by raising level above high tide mark. Creation of dry meadows by adventive grasses succeeding spartina. Immense biodiversity loss. Able to reduce large estuaries and shallow harbours to thin drains surrounded by rough pasture.

## Typical habitats

Estuaries, mangroves and other inter-tidal zones with soft sediment.

## Control

1. Spray: Gallant NF 1% + penetrant. All year round on outgoing tide to maximize exposure. Light spray, not to runoff. 2-4 hours rainfast needed.
2. Weed wiper: Gallant NF 25% + penetrant. See (1) above.
3. Stem injection (small sites only): slash and remove tops. Inject 1 ml of 50% Gallant NF into each stem, on outgoing tide.

## Site management

Refer to Department of Conservation guidelines. Control is impossible with stock as they spread spartina and tread it in. Resource consents are needed for herbicide and most other control methods. Use herbicides after heavy rain (usually winter-spring) or consider hosing beforehand. This is because spartina is encrusted with salt and mud. Follow up before regrowth reaches 20 cm to prevent rhizome recovery (usually annually)

## Species recovery

Rhizome fragments survive digging. Resprouting occurs by dropped pieces and sprayed stands.

**For more information freephone 0508 800 800.**

