



### ***Cortaderia selloana*** **PAMPAS GRASS**

SEPTEMBER 2008

A former garden plant also used as a windbreak in agriculture, Pampas Grass has escaped to become a serious and widespread weed in urban bushland.

#### **DESCRIPTION**

Pampas Grass is a long-lived perennial that grows in large clumping tussock. It can grow to a height of two to three metres with flower heads up to six metres. These flower heads are cream, white or pink in colour. The leaves are long and thin with very sharp edges and are bluish green above and dark green below.

#### **EFFECTS ON THE ENVIRONMENT**

Due to the enormous quantities of seed produced and distance of seed dispersal Pampas Grass has the potential to become a major weed, particularly in urban bushland. Individual plants can form dense clumps several metres across and can rapidly colonise areas forming dense infestations. Established plants are very competitive and will exclude natural plant communities. Pampas Grass also produces large quantities of flammable material and dense infestations increase bushfire hazard and fire control costs.

#### **HABITAT**

Pampas Grass appears to have no special habitat preference. It can be found in a variety of locations and will readily invade pristine bushland although it prefers open, sunny conditions and does especially well in wetter conditions. It occurs initially as a weed mainly in the disturbed areas associated with service roads, pipeline cuts and walking or horse trails. Following this initial infestation seed is spread into bushland areas.



Pampas Grass grows in large tufts.  
Source: Sutherland Shire Council

## ORIGIN AND DISTRIBUTION

Pampas Grass is native to South America where it grows mainly on the lower altitude savanna and grassland plains. It was introduced to Australia as an ornamental late last century and grown as a garden plant or as a windbreak and fodder source on farms. Each flower head can produce up to 100,000 seeds and are readily dispersed up to 25 kms by wind.

## DECLARATION

Pampas Grass has been gazetted as a noxious weed in all areas of the state. The Noxious Weeds Act 1993 is an instrument serving the protection of our environment, general health of the community and agricultural production. Under the Noxious Weeds Act 1993 all noxious weeds must be controlled. The act applies to all landowners and occupiers. This weed has a control category of class 3. For class 3 noxious weeds: *“the plant must be fully and continuously suppressed and destroyed”*. Failure to comply with the prescribed categories may result in a fine of 100 penalty units.

## CONTROL

De-seed by cutting off plumes (flower heads) and seal them in a plastic bag for disposal. Digging out small plants is the best control method in urban and bushland areas. With large plants either dig out the plant including root ball or use herbicides. Council staff can assist with information on the most appropriate herbicide. Cover all exposed skin and wear eye protection and gloves.



Pampas Grass readily invades bushland.  
Source: Sutherland Shire Council

For further information contact  
Bushcare or Greenweb Units  
on 02 9710 0333  
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