**Panicum repens**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kingdom</th>
<th>Phylum</th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Order</th>
<th>Family</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plantae</td>
<td>Magnoliophyta</td>
<td>Liliopsida</td>
<td>Cyperales</td>
<td>Poaceae</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**System:** Terrestrial

**Common name**
- wainaku grass (English), Victoria grass (English), torpedo grass (English), panic grass (English), panic rampant (French), couch panic (English), creeping panic (English), kriechende Hirse (German), canota (Spanish), millet rampant (French)

**Synonym**
- *Panicum gouinii*, (Fourn.)
- *Panicum airoides*, R. Br.
- *Panicum arenarium*, Brotero
- *Panicum chromatostigma*, Pilg.
- *Panicum hycrocharis*, Steud.
- *Panicum ischaemoides*, Retz.
- *Panicum kinshassense*, Vanderyst
- *Panicum leiogonum*, Delile
- *Panicum littorale*, C. Mohr ex Vasey
- *Panicum roxburghianum*, Schult.
- *Panicum sieberi*, Link
- *Panicum tuberosum*, Llanos
- *Panicum uliginosum*, Roxb. ex Roem. & Schult.

**Similar species**

**Summary**

Panicum repens is a perennial grass that frequently forms dense colonies and has long, creeping rhizomes. It grows in moist, often sandy soils and its rhizomes often extend several feet out into the water. Panicum repens frequently forms dense floating mats that impede water flow in ditches and canals and restrict recreational use of shoreline areas of lakes and ponds. Management of Panicum repens involves the repeated application of herbicides. There is very little physical management that can be used to control Panicum repens, as disturbance encourages its growth.

[view this species on IUCN Red List](http://www.iucngisd.org/gisd/species.php?sc=777)
Species Description

*P. repens* is a perennial grass that frequently forms dense colonies and has long, creeping rhizomes. Flowering stems are erect and up to 0.8m tall. The lower stems sometimes lack leaf blades and consist of only sheaths. Leaves of the upper stem have sheaths and blades. The blades are relatively short, flat or sometimes folded and from 2 to 5mm wide. The inflorescence is a loose, open panicle that is 3 to 10cm long that has weakly divergent to ascending branches. Spikelets are about 2.5mm long (ERDC, UNDATED).

Lifecycle Stages

Hossain *et al.* (2001a) state that, "*P. repens* propagates mainly by rhizomes, which are difficult to control when well established. *P. repens* develops rhizomes when around 50 days old in the summer season (24-30°C), and primary and secondary branches of the rhizome usually develop 70 and 130 days after planting (DAP), respectively. Rhizomes can penetrate into soil up to 50cm deep, and they require up to 120 days after planting to complete emergence depending on their burial depth. A single culm emerging from a single rhizome bud produced about 23,000 rhizome buds in 1 year. The biomass of *P. repens* increases rapidly from 50 DAP with the increasing number of rhizome buds and shoots."

Uses

Hossain *et al.* (2001b) state that, "*P. repens* is also recognized as a pasture grass, and it could be harvested five to seven times a year in tropical and subtropical areas. A higher amount of rhizomes and roots makes a loose mat-like structure in soil up to 50cm in depth, and indicates that this species could be used for soil erosion control."

Habitat Description

ERDC (UNDATED) reports that, "*P. repens* grows in moist, often sandy soil along beaches and dunes, margins of lagoons, marshy shorelines of lakes and ponds, drainage ditches and canals. Its rhizomes or runners often extend several feet out into the water, and the plant frequently forms dense floating mats."

Brecke *et al.* (2001) state: "*P. repens* is a perennial weed that can be found along ditch banks, around ponds, along roadsides, and in managed turfgrass areas, including golf courses (McCarty *et al.* 1993). This exotic grass persists in terrestrial, wetland, and aquatic environments of tropical and subtropical regions around the world (Sutton 1996). It has spread throughout the gulf coast region from Florida to Texas (McCarty *et al.* 1993; Murphy *et al.* 1992). It is a serious problem in the lower coastal plain of Alabama and Mississippi, and in much of Florida where it is primarily a weed of moist, sandy soils, but it can also grow in finer textured soils (Wilcut *et al.* 1988)."

Reproduction

Brecke *et al.* (2001) state that, "*P. repens* rhizomes have the potential to regenerate and produce dense stands from small fragments. Due to the lack of apical dominance, each node has the unique ability to produce axillary buds along the entire rhizome (Wilcut *et al.* 1988 ). Emergence of new shoots from buried rhizome fragments occurs from as deep as 50cm (Hossain *et al.* 1999 )." FLEPPC (2003) report that *P. repens*'s growth rate is stimulated by tilling and fertilization, and reproduces principally by rhizome extension and fragmentation.
Nutrition
FLEPPC (2003) states that, "P. repens is tolerant of drought and partial shade, and can grow on heavy upland soils, but thrives in moist to wet sandy or organic soil."

General Impacts
ERDC (Undated) reports that, "The dense floating mats of P. repens may impede water flow in ditches and canals and restrict recreational use of shoreline areas of lakes and ponds." The Florida Exotic Pest Plant Council (FLEPPC, 2003) states that, "P. repens has been reported as a weed of 17 crops in 27 countries, and is considered one of the most serious grass weeds." The authors go on to state that, "P. repens quickly forms monocultures that displace native vegetation, particularly in or near shallow waters." Avid (1999) reports that, "P. repens formed dense monotypic stands in response to increased hydroperiod (depth and duration of flooding)." Brecke et al. (2001) states that in Florida, "P. repens is very competitive and has reduced common bermudagrass (Cynodon dactylon (L.) Pers.) growth by nearly 40% after 2 yr (Wilcut et al. 1988). Tillage will not control P. repens, and may in fact serve to spread the weed to previously un-infested areas (Holm et al. 1977)." Williams et al. (2003) states that, "Because of the lack of apical dominance, every node along the entire rhizome may sprout nearly simultaneously (Wilcut et al. 1988)."

Management Info
For details on management of this species including physical, chemical and biological control please read our pdf file on management information.

Pathway

Principal source: PIER, 1999, Panicum repens L., Poaceae
ERDC, UNDATED. Panicum repens L. (Torpedo Grass)

Compiler: National Biological Information Infrastructure (NBII) & IUCN/SSC Invasive Species Specialist Group (ISSG)

Review:

Publication date: 2006-10-04
FULL ACCOUNT FOR: *Panicum repens*

ALIEN RANGE

[1] AUSTRALIA  
[1] CAMBODIA  
[1] NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS  
[1] PALAU  
[17] UNITED STATES  
[1] VIET NAM

BIBLIOGRAPHY

21 references found for *Panicum repens*

Management information


**Summary:** Scientific study containing detailed information on the control and management of species


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**Summary:** This report is the first stage in a three-stage development of a Border Control Programme for aquatic plants that have the potential to become ecological weeds in New Zealand.


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**Summary:** Scientific study containing detailed information on the control and management of species

ERDC (Engineer Research and Development Center). UNDATED. *Panicum repens* L. (Torpedo Grass) U.S. Army Corps of Engineers: Noxious and Nuisance Plant Management Information System.

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General information

Summary: The species list sheet for the Mexican information system on invasive species currently provides information related to Scientific names, family, group and common names, as well as habitat, status of invasion in Mexico, pathways of introduction and links to other specialised websites. Some of the higher risk species already have a direct link to the alert page. It is important to notice that these lists are constantly being updated, please refer to the main page (http://www.conabio.gob.mx/invasoras/index.php/Portada), under the section Novedades for information on updates.

Summary: An online database that provides taxonomic information, common names, synonyms and geographical jurisdiction of a species. In addition links are provided to retrieve biological records and collection information from the Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF) Data Portal and bioscience articles from BioOne journals.

Summary: Scientific experiment assessing the health of species under varying environmental conditions.

Summary: Available from: http://plants.usda.gov/java/nameSearch?mode=Scientific+Name&keywordquery=Panicum+repens&go.x=8&go.y=8 [Accessed 29 December 2005]

Summary: Available from: http://plants.usda.gov/java/nameSearch?mode=Scientific+Name&keywordquery=Panicum+repens&go.x=8&go.y=8 [Accessed 29 December 2005]

Summary: A study that documents the species responses to different nutrient uptake means.