

Ischaemum polystachyum [简体中文](#) [正體中文](#)

System: Terrestrial

Kingdom	Phylum	Class	Order	Family
Plantae	Magnoliophyta	Liliopsida	Cyperales	Poaceae

Common name paddle grass (English), reh padil (English, Pohnpei), mah (English, Kosrae)

Synonym *Ischaemum digitatum* , var. *polystachyum* (J. Presl) Hack
Andropogon mariannae , Steud.
Andropogon paniceus , Steud.
Ischaemum chordatum , (Trin.) Hack. ex Warb.
Ischaemum digitatum , Brongn.
Ischaemum intermedium , Brongn.
Spodiopogon chordatum , Trin.

Similar species *Ischaemum tropicum*, *Ischaemum timorense*

Summary Considered to be native to many Pacific Islands, *Ischaemum polystachyum* (paddle grass) is apparently one of few plants to become a native invasive. In Pohnpei (Federated States of Micronesia) it is considered a particularly aggressive plant and is very abundant on other Islands of it's native range. Paddle grass mainly inhabits roadsides, garden clearings and grasslands.



[view this species on IUCN Red List](#)

Species Description

Sprawling grass, with long decumbent culms finally ascending to a little more than a metre in height.; pubescence of nodes, sheaths and blades variable; racemes 4-7 (or more), about 8cm long, spreading; rachis joints and pedicels trigonous, the angle scabrous or short-ciliate, about 4mm long, bowed equally away from each other; fertile lemma of sessile spikelet bearing a twisted geniculate awn, (Henty, 1969, in PIER, 2002). Tends to be gregarious, (Henty, 1969).

Notes

Although this is a native grass, it is very abundant along roadsides and in disturbed areas. It is particularly aggressive on Pohnpei. (PIER, 2002)

Uses

In New Guinea the Asaro people were reported to plant paddle grass to control soil movement on slopes, (Henty, 1969).

Habitat Description

In New Guinea *Ischaemum polystachyum* grows on roadsides. It is also present in garden clearings and grasslands from sea level to 2,000m, (Henty, 1969, in PIER, 2002). In New Guinea, in the Eastern highlands, it forms dense stands in wet gullies, (Henty, 1969).

Reproduction

Reproduction occurs by seed. (PIER, 2002). Culms also root at nodes. Vegetative reproduction is probably also important (Waterhouse, pers. comm, 2003)

General Impacts

Forms dense swards, which tend to exclude other species. (Waterhouse, pers.comm. 16 March 2003)

Management Info

Preventative measures: [A Risk assessment of *Ischaemum polystachyum*](#) for the Pacific region was prepared by Pacific Island Ecosystems at Risk (PIER) using the Australian risk assessment system (Pheloung, 1995). The result is a score of 20 and a recommendation of: reject the plant for import (Australia) or species likely to be a pest (Pacific).

Pathway

Introduced to Pohnpei, Micronesia as cattle fodder. (College of Micronesia, 1999) Introduced sometimes with translocation of produce. Introduced sometimes with translocation of livestock. Introduced sometimes with translocation of machinery.

Principal source: [Pacific Island Ecosystem at Risk \(PIER\)](#)

Compiler: IUCN/SSC Invasive Species Specialist Group (ISSG)

Review: Barbara Waterhouse. Botanist, Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service and Cooperative Research Centre for Australian Weed Management. Australia.

Publication date: 2006-01-26

ALIEN RANGE

[1] MICRONESIA, FEDERATED STATES OF

[1] TROPICAL ASIA

BIBLIOGRAPHY

7 references found for *Ischaemum polystachyum*

Management information

[PIER \(Pacific Island Ecosystems at Risk\), 2002. *Ischaemum polystachyum*](#)

Summary: Ecology, synonyms, common names, distributions (Pacific as well as global), management and impact information. Available from: http://www.hear.org/pier/species/ischaemum_polystachyum.htm [Accessed 25 February 2003].

General information

[College of Micronesia, 1999. *Invasive species walk. Pohnpei, Micronesia.*](#)

Summary: Information about introduction into Pohnpei.

Available from: <http://www.comfsm.fm/~dleeing/invasive/invasive99.html> [Accessed 25 February 2003].

Henty, E.E. 1969. A Manual of the Grasses of New Guinea. Lae: Department of Forests Botany Bulletin No 1.

Summary: Brief description of the plant and of its habitat in New Guinea.

[Meyer, J.-Y. 2000. *Invasive plants in the Pacific Islands. In: The Invasive Species in the Pacific: A Technical Review and Draft Regional Strategy.* Sherley, G. \(tech. ed\). Published in June 2000 by the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme \(SPREP\).](#)

Summary: Resource that includes the distribution of invasive species throughout the Pacific Islands.

[Missouri Botanic Gardens TROPICOS database](#)

Summary: Synonyms.

Sharp, D. & Simon, B. K. 2002. AusGrass Grasses of Australia. CSIRO Publishing.

Summary: Description of *Ischaemum polystachyum*, some brief distribution and notes.

[Sillitoe, Paul. *The Results Of a Survey Of The Composition Of Plant Communities In The Highlands Of Papua New Guinea.* Durham University, Durham, England DH1 3HN.](#)

Summary: Survey of plants present in the highlands of Papua New Guinea.

Available from: <http://www.dur.ac.uk/paul.sillitoe/veg.html> [Accessed 25 February 2003].