

WARNING

Declared Class 1

Mexican feather grass *Nassella tenuissima*



Mexican feather grass habit



Densely tufted perennial tussock
Photo courtesy Brisbane City Council

- A densely tufted perennial tussock grass
- Grows to about 70 cm high
- Seed heads are 15–25 cm long

UPDATE

- Mexican feather grass was recently supplied to Queensland from a southern wholesaler



Seed head
Photo courtesy Brisbane City Council



Seed head showing entangled awns



Awn 45–90 mm extending from the end of seed
Photo courtesy Brisbane City Council

- A small number of nurseries and landscapers have sold Mexican feather grass labelled as such things as *Stipa capillata* or *Stipa capriccio*
- Do not attempt to remove suspect plants – please call **13 25 23** for further advice



Mexican feather grass *Nassella tenuissima*

Description

Mexican feather grass (*Nassella tenuissima*) is a Class 1 declared pest plant in Queensland. Class 1 pests are targets for eradication from the state. Landowners must take reasonable steps to keep their land free of Class 1 pests. It is a serious offence to introduce, keep or supply a Class 1 pest without a permit issued by the Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries. Penalties of up to \$60,000 apply.

Mexican feather grass is a densely tufted perennial tussock grass growing to about 70 cm high and is similar to serrated tussock. Seed heads are 15–25 cm long, lower glume is 9–10 mm long, leaves are thread-like, 0.25–0.5 mm in diameter, about 60 cm long and stems are up to 70 cm high.

Mexican feather grass, native to Chile, Argentina, New Mexico and Texas is a low-protein, high-fibre grass that has no grazing value. Pure stands of Mexican feather grass would render a paddock worthless. Mexican feather grass is closely related to several other exotic grasses, including serrated tussock (*N. trichotoma*) and Chilean needle grass (*N. neesiana*), both of which are Weeds of National Significance. Serrated tussock costs New South Wales' agriculture more than \$40 million annually and is causing severe environmental damage to native grasslands. Mexican feather grass is similar to serrated tussock, in terms of ecology and growth.

The problem

Mexican feather grass has the potential to spread over millions of hectares in Queensland, causing significant damage to grazing land and replacing native grasses. Early detection and eradication could prevent multi-million dollar losses and protect our native flora and fauna.

What should I do?

If you see the plant, please contact the pest management officer or environmental officer at your local council, or your local Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries land protection officer on 13 25 23.

For further information visit the Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries website at www.dpi.qld.gov.au.

Declaration details

Mexican feather grass is a Class 1 declared plant under the *Land Protection (Pest and Stock Route Management) Act 2002*. It is an offence to sell this plant, and it must be destroyed where found. It is also an offence to introduce, keep, supply or transport the plant without a permit issued by the Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries, attracting fines of up to \$60,000.