



### *Cenchrus ciliaris* L., buffelgrass, Poaceae

Synonyms: *Pennisetum ciliare* (L.) Link, *Pennisetum incomptum* Nees ex Steud., *Pennisetum ciliare* var. *ciliare* (L.) (other synonyms at [https://www.itis.gov/servlet/SingleRpt/SingleRpt?search\\_topic=TSN&search\\_value=40574#null](https://www.itis.gov/servlet/SingleRpt/SingleRpt?search_topic=TSN&search_value=40574#null))



Buffelgrass habit. Joseph M. DiTomaso, University of California - Davis, Bugwood.org.

### Species Description & Habitat

#### Species Description

Buffelgrass is a perennial bunchgrass that can grow to 15 dm tall. Leaf blades are bluish-green turning golden brown during dry periods and are 3-30 cm long with small stiff hairs that give leaves a rough texture. The inflorescence is 2-14 cm long, cylindrical and slightly fuzzy giving it a bottlebrush appearance, and can be reddish, purple, gray or yellowish. The seed-head is reddish or purplish brown turning tan when the seeds are mature. Buffelgrass spreads by seeds and rhizomes with seeds dispersed via wind, water, animal fur, and on clothing and footwear.

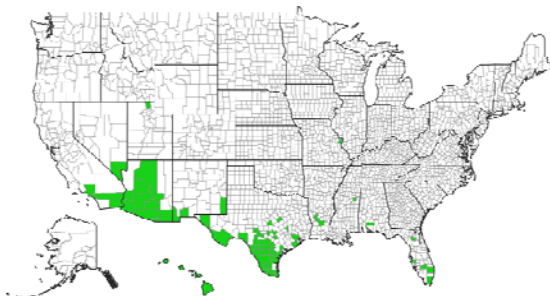
#### Habitat

The species occurs in disturbed sites including road rights-of-way, agricultural areas, disturbed sites, vacant lots, range and grasslands, south-facing mountain slopes, and riparian zones.

### Introduction and Impact

Buffelgrass was introduced to the United States in the 1930s as livestock forage, and has also been used for erosion control and soil stabilization. Experimental plantings and trials were conducted in southern Arizona from 1938 to the early 1980s.

Buffelgrass has transformed fire-resistant desert to flammable grassland. It grows in dense stands, crowding out native plants, and negatively impacts wildlife and wildlife habitat. It is a serious threat to the saguaro



State where buffelgrass is reported invasive. EDDMapS. 2018. Early Detection & Distribution Mapping System. The University of Georgia-Center for Invasive Species and Ecosystem Health. Available online at <http://www.eddmaps.org/>; last accessed May 26, 2018.

### Distribution in Introduced Range

In the United States, buffelgrass is documented from Alabama, Arizona, California, Florida, Hawaii, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Nevada, New Mexico, New York, Oklahoma, Puerto Rico, Texas, Utah, and the Virgin Islands.

Buffelgrass is cultivated and has become invasive in Australia, North and South America, and many islands in the Pacific Ocean, Indian Ocean and the Caribbean Sea.



Buffelgrass inflorescence with seed. Joseph M. DiTomaso, University of California - Davis, Bugwood.org.



Buffelgrass stem. Joseph M. DiTomaso, University of California - Davis, Bugwood.org.

## Control and Management

An integrated management approach is the most effective way to control buffelgrass. Methods should include manual and mechanical methods, herbicide treatment, and active restoration. Small patches can be controlled through repeated cultivation, cutting, or mowing, and grazing followed by herbicide application. Dicamba, 2,4-D, 3,6-dichloropicolinic acid, triclopyr, tebuthiuron, or hexazinone have been effective in controlling this species ([https://wiki.bugwood.org/Pennisetum\\_ciliare](https://wiki.bugwood.org/Pennisetum_ciliare)).

## Regulatory Status

This species is listed as a Prohibited noxious weed and Regulated noxious weed in the state of Arizona.

## References and Resources

Arizona Desert Museum. Buffelgrass. (<http://www.desertmuseum.org/buffelgrass/>). Updated 2018. Accessed 26 May 2018.

Bugwood Wiki ([https://wiki.bugwood.org/Pennisetum\\_ciliare](https://wiki.bugwood.org/Pennisetum_ciliare)). Updated 14 January 2014. Accessed 26 May 2018.

Integrated Taxonomic Information System, ITIS (<https://www.itis.gov/>). Updated 20 May 2018. Accessed 20 May 2018. (Naming convention follows ITIS).

Invasive.org. Center for Invasive Species and Ecosystem Health (<https://www.invasive.org/species/grasses.cfm>).

United States Department of Agriculture Plants Database (<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=PECI>). Accessed 26 May 2018.

United States Department of Agriculture National Agricultural Library. National Invasive Species Information Center (<https://www.invasivespeciesinfo.gov/plants/main.shtml>). Updated 29 June 2017.