

## Why is buffelgrass a problem?

Buffelgrass, an introduced invasive grass, forms dense stands, crowding out native plants and animals, and bringing fire to an ecosystem that is not meant to burn. Please visit [www.buffelgrass.org](http://www.buffelgrass.org) for more information.



Invades undisturbed desert habitat



Competes with saguaros and other native vegetation



Inhibits animal movement, alters habitat and displaces wildlife forage



Fuel load is up to 4,000 x higher than typical desert, leading to large wildfires



Wildfire kills desert plants & animals, and poses a major safety hazard to adjoining urban areas

## What do you do if you have buffelgrass on your property?

There are two main ways to remove buffelgrass effectively; if the plant is green, herbicides can be used to kill the plant. Herbicide only works on actively growing plants, thus it has to be green when you spray it. If less than 50% of the plant is green manual removal is the best method. With any removal technique, a follow up treatment will have to be performed for the next 3-5 growing seasons, thus removing the seed that is still in the soil.

### Chemical Control (Herbicide):

- Plants must be at least 50% green and actively growing for herbicide to be effective; this usually occurs during the monsoon rains, but can also occur in the winter if climatic conditions are right
- Products containing glyphosate are very effective and are readily available at hardware stores
- Follow the label directions; a 2% glyphosate solution works well to kill buffelgrass
- Spray enough herbicide to coat all the green leaves, but not to the point that it drips off
- Adding a dye to the chemical solution can help you to avoid spraying non-target species

### Manual Control (Pulling):

- Mowing alone is not an effective control method; this actually stimulates new growth
- A digging tool is needed to loosen the soil around the plant so that it can be pulled up without leaving the base of the plant behind; if part of the plant remains in the soil, it will resprout
- Soil bars (aka Caliche bars, digging bars, rock picks) work well; wedge soil bar point into soil at base of plant at an angle, push down on soil bar to lever plant out of ground
- Shake dirt off of roots and place in a heavy duty trash bag
- If a blanket of seeds remains, sweeping them up will minimize the # of seedlings next season

### Disposal:

Place plants that are pulled up into trash bags and place with other trash items to be collected by the city.



Volunteer with us! For more information regarding volunteer efforts in the region,  
Go to the [www.buffelgrass.org](http://www.buffelgrass.org) "Upcoming Events" section

OR

Contact the Saguaro National Park East Weedwackers Volunteer Coordinator  
at [sagu\\_invasive@NPS.gov](mailto:sagu_invasive@NPS.gov)



# **Buffelgrass (*Pennisetum ciliare*) Identification**

Buffelgrass can look dramatically different depending on the time of year. It can be lush and green after good rains, but quickly dries down to a straw colored plant. Below are a few characteristics that will help you to correctly identify buffelgrass.



**GREEN  
BUFFELGRASS.**  
Inset shows  
inflorescence  
(seed heads).



**Volunteer  
removing DRY  
BUFFELGRASS.**



**BOTTLE BRUSH  
SEEDHEADS:**  
Buffelgrass has a  
very distinct flower  
that looks like a  
bottle brush. The  
flower can range in  
color from reddish  
or purplish brown  
when seeds are  
young to a tan color  
when seeds are  
mature.



**ROUGH RACHIS:**  
Once the seeds  
fall from the  
plant, the rachis  
(central stem  
where the seeds  
were attached)  
is very rough to  
the touch.



**HAIRY LIGULE:**  
Tiny  
whitish/blond  
hairs can be  
seen at the base  
of the leaf  
where it  
diverges from  
the stem.