

Spartina alterniflora

COMMON NAME

American spartina

SYNONYMS

Sporobolus alterniflorus (Loisel.) P.M.Peterson & Saarela

FAMILY

Poaceae

AUTHORITY

Spartina alterniflora Loisel.

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Exotic

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Grasses

NVS CODE

SPAALT

CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

HABITAT

Aquatic: Emergent. Saline. Estuaries, mangroves and other intertidal zones with soft sediment.

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

OBL: Obligate Wetland

Almost always is a hydrophyte, rarely in uplands (non-wetlands).

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Robust perennial clump forming grass to 1m. **Rhizomes** thick, fleshy, far-creeping, forming open clumps. **Culm** erect, 8–30 mm diameter near base, including closely ensheathing leaves. **Leaves** 8–45 cm × 6–15 mm, persistent, coriaceous, flat, glabrous, adaxially ribbed, much narrowed to fine hard tip. **Flowers** rarely seen.

SIMILAR TAXA

Can be distinguished from other *Spartina* species by the rather open clumps, large shoots (8–30 mm diameter), occasional plants flowering, and on those that do, the spikelets is not hairy.

FLOWERING

N/A

LIFE CYCLE

Perennial. Flowers are hardly ever seen (Timmins & MacKenzie 1995). Vegetative reproduction from underground rhizomes, seed not produced (ibid.). Rhizome fragments survive digging, dropped pieces resprout (ibid.)

YEAR NATURALISED

1965

ORIGIN

N. America

REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Agricultural

TOLERANCES

The plant is intolerant to shade and drought; tolerant to poor drainage and highly tolerant of salt. Physical damage and grazing result in the resprouting of underground rhizomes (Timmins & MacKenzie 1995).



REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Timmins SM, Mackenzie IW. 1995. Weeds in New Zealand Protected Natural Areas database. *Department of Conservation Technical Series 8*. Department of Conservation, Wellington, NZ. 282 p.

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/spartina-alterniflora/>