Spartina ×townsendii

COMMON NAMES
spartina

BIOSTATUS
Exotic

CONSERVATION STATUS
Not applicable

CATEGORY
Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS
Grasses

DETAILED DESCRIPTION
Stiff perennial grass 10–50 cm tall, with fleshy rhizomes forming dense clumps or swards. **Leaf-blade** 5–35 cm × 4–10 mm, flat or inrolled, hairless and narrowed to fine hard tip. **Culm** erect, 3–8 mm diameter near base including closely ensheathing leaves. **Inflorescence** 8–30 cm, erect, seed always aborted.

SIMILAR TAXA
Can be separated from *S. alterniflora* by the smaller culm (3–8 mm) and from *S. anglica* by its generally smaller size, (10–50 cm) and aborted pollen and seed (*S. anglica* is 50–100 cm tall and has viable seed).

HABITAT
Aquatic: Emergent. Saline.

GENUS
Spartina

FAMILY
Poaceae

AUTHORITY
Spartina ×townsendii H.Grives et J.Groves

ENDEMIC FAMILY
No

YEAR NATURALISED
1924

ORIGIN
England

REASON FOR INTRODUCTION
Agricultural

TOLERANCES
Can tolerate extreme saline conditions.

CONTROL TECHNIQUES
Perennial

LIFE CYCLE AND DISPERSAL
Perennial. Does not set seed, reproduces entirely by rhizomes. *S. ×townsendii* is sterile and does not set seed. Dispersed by livestock, propellers, nets etc dislodge rhizome fragments, tidal and current movement, intentional planting. Can survive long-tem at sea, moves long distances.

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

OBL: Obligate Wetland
Almost always is a hydrophyte, rarely in uplands (non-wetlands).

MORE INFORMATION

https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/spartina-townsendii/

PDF DATE

27 May 2026