

# Stenotaphrum secundatum

## COMMON NAMES

buffalo grass

## BIOSTATUS

Exotic

## CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

## CATEGORY

Vascular

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Grasses

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Dense, mat-forming, coarse perennial grass. **Stolons** stout, long, usually reddish, occasionally with thin rhizomes. **Leaves** alternate, 40–100 × 4–12 mm, dull greyish to bluish green, flattened strap-like, tip hooded which splits when flattened, blades folded at base, ligule a tiny fringe, auricles missing. **Sheath** large, broad, with fine green and white stripes, usually has reddish tinge, with 3–4 mm hairs at blade junction. **Seedhead** rigid, flattened, brittle spike; seeds usually aligned to one side.

## SIMILAR TAXA

Smothering growth form is similar to kikuyu (*Cenchrus clandestinus*). The distinctive flattened seedhead, easily separates buffalo grass from all other species.

## HABITAT

Terrestrial. Light demanding (West, 1996). On Raoul this grass is found on coastal areas and occasionally young plants are found along tracks through the forest and even in the wet forest (West, 1996). Smothers coastal areas (Cameron 1996).

## GENUS

Stenotaphrum

## FAMILY

Poaceae

## AUTHORITY

Stenotaphrum secundatum (Walter) Kuntze

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## YEAR NATURALISED

1872

## ORIGIN

Tropical America and Africa

## REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Agricultural

## TOLERANCES

Tolerant of salt spray (West, 1996).



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### LIFE CYCLE AND DISPERSAL

Perennial. Most spread is by stolon fragments, occasionally by seed. Seeds are mostly dispersed over short distances by wind and over larger distances carried on animals (fur, feathers) and by human activity (West, 1996).

### ENVIRONMENTAL WEED (2024)

**This plant is named in a list of 386 environmental weeds in New Zealand 2024 prepared by DOC.** 759 candidate species were considered for inclusion on this new comprehensive list of environmental weeds in New Zealand. The species considered were drawn from published lists of weed species, lists of plants that must be reported or managed by law if observed, existing national and regional programmes and agreements for pest management, and species already managed by the Department of Conservation (DOC). Candidate species were then assessed to see if they were fully naturalised and whether they have more than minor impacts in natural ecosystems. Read the full report [here](#).

### NVS CODE

STESEC

### REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

West CJ. 1996. Assessment of the weed control programme on Raoul Island, Kermadec Group. *Science & Research Series No. 98*. Department of Conservation, Wellington, NZ. 100 p.

### MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/stenotaphrum-secundatum/>

### PDF DATE

25 May 2026