

Invasive Species Fact Sheet

Pacific Islands Area

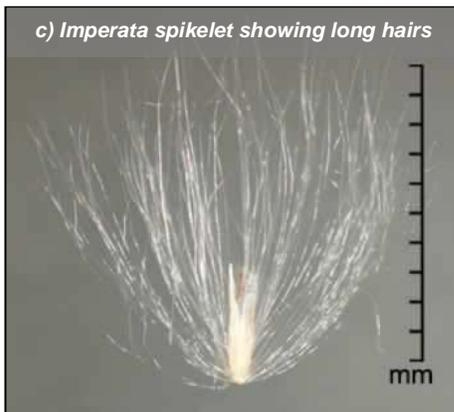
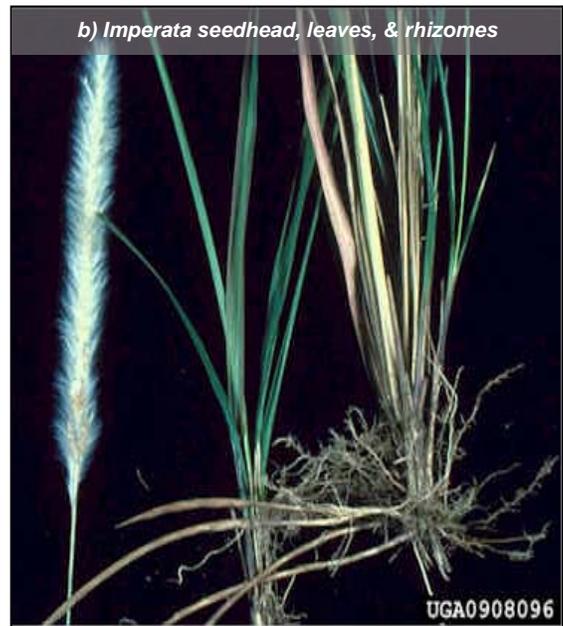
Cogongrass (*Imperata cylindrica*)



Scientific name & Code:	<i>Imperata cylindrica</i> (L.) P. Beauv., IMCY <u>Synonyms</u> – <i>Imperata arundacea</i> Cirillo., <i>Lagurus cylindricus</i> L.
Family:	Poaceae (grass family)
Common names:	<u>English</u> – Cogongrass, alang-alang, blady grass, Japanese blood grass, satintail; <u>Fijian</u> – gi; <u>Bontoc</u> – gaon, goon; <u>Bicolano</u> – gogon; <u>Ibatan</u> – buchid; <u>Ifugao</u> – bulum; <u>Ilocano</u> – kogon; <u>Japanese</u> – chi, chigaya, tsubana; <u>Palauan</u> – kasoring; <u>Pampangan</u> – ilib; <u>Tagalog</u> – kogon
Origin:	Southeast Asia
Description:	Perennial, sod-forming (rhizomatous), warm season (C4) grass. Very long (1+m), erect leaf blades arising from the base, the mid-rib offset from center. Inflorescence (seedhead) a compact panicle, cylindrical in cross section (30 cm x 2 cm). Spikelets paired or solitary with a few long fine hairs near the top and many fine spreading white hairs on the base.
Propagation:	Reproduces by seed and rhizomes. Stress (burning, cutting, or drought) initiates flowering. Prolific seed producer (3,000+ per plant). Seeds dispersed by wind (aided by hairs on spikelets). Within a week of harvest, 95% of seeds can germinate. Seeds can remain viable for at least one year.
Distribution:	Common weed in tropical and subtropical areas of the world. Identified (introduced) in Saipan, Tinian, and Guam. An additional species <i>I. conferta</i> occurs in Rota, Saipan, Tinian, and Guam.
Habitat / Ecology:	Invades a wide variety of habitats including wetlands, riparian areas, savannahs, and forests. Rapidly invades abandoned farmlands and disturbed areas. Can withstand long dry spells on light soils and waterlogging on heavier soils. Not shade-tolerant. Can grow at elevations up to 2,000 m.
Environmental impact:	Out competes other plants and forms a pure stand on favorable soils (deep & moist). Less likely to invade on poorer soils. Favored by repeated burning where it responds by rapidly growing and producing numerous flowers. Prone to top burning in the dry season: the underground plant parts remain undamaged. Unsuitable forage for domestic or wild animals.
Management:	<u>Physical</u> – Digging and removing plants and underground roots and rhizomes is effective in small areas. Flattening foliage with rollers or boards in combination with a legume crop can suppress growth. <u>Chemical</u> – Repeated applications of Glyphosate to actively growing foliage will translocate to roots and rhizomes, killing the plant in 2-4 weeks. Chemical should be applied at least 6-8 hours before rainfall to avoid washing off of the plants. Burning several months before chemical treatment can enhance uptake of the herbicide. <u>Biological</u> – None known

PIER Risk Assessment: High Risk, score: 19

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