

Environmental weed risk assessment

Couch, couch grass, Bermuda grass (*Cynodon dactylon*)

Couch grass is a creeping grass with rhizomes which is commonly grown as a lawn or turf grass and is also grown as a pasture grass, especially in south-eastern United States. There is considerable debate as to whether couch is native to northern Australia, with the general consensus that it was a pre-European introduction (Weeds of Australia). Hussey et al. (2007) state that *C. dactylon* is “native to the Kimberley and the tropics worldwide.” This is a species with native forms in the tropics, but with exotic weedy forms in temperate Western Australia (Keighery and Longman 2004).

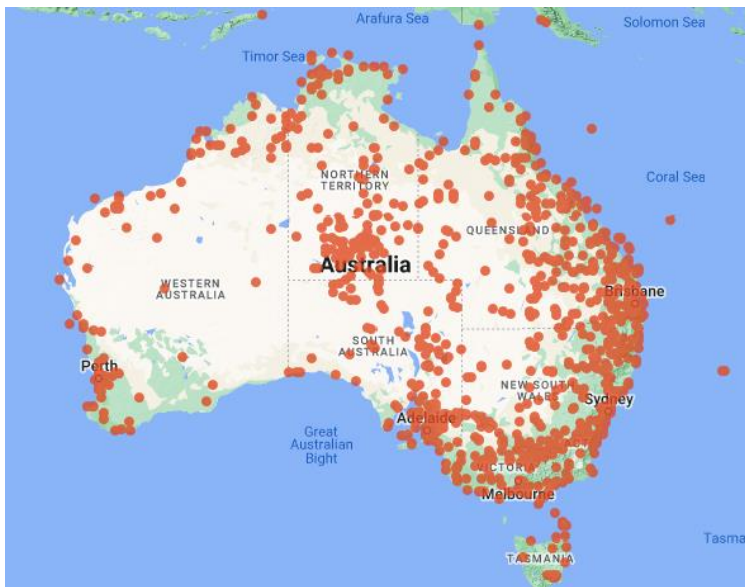


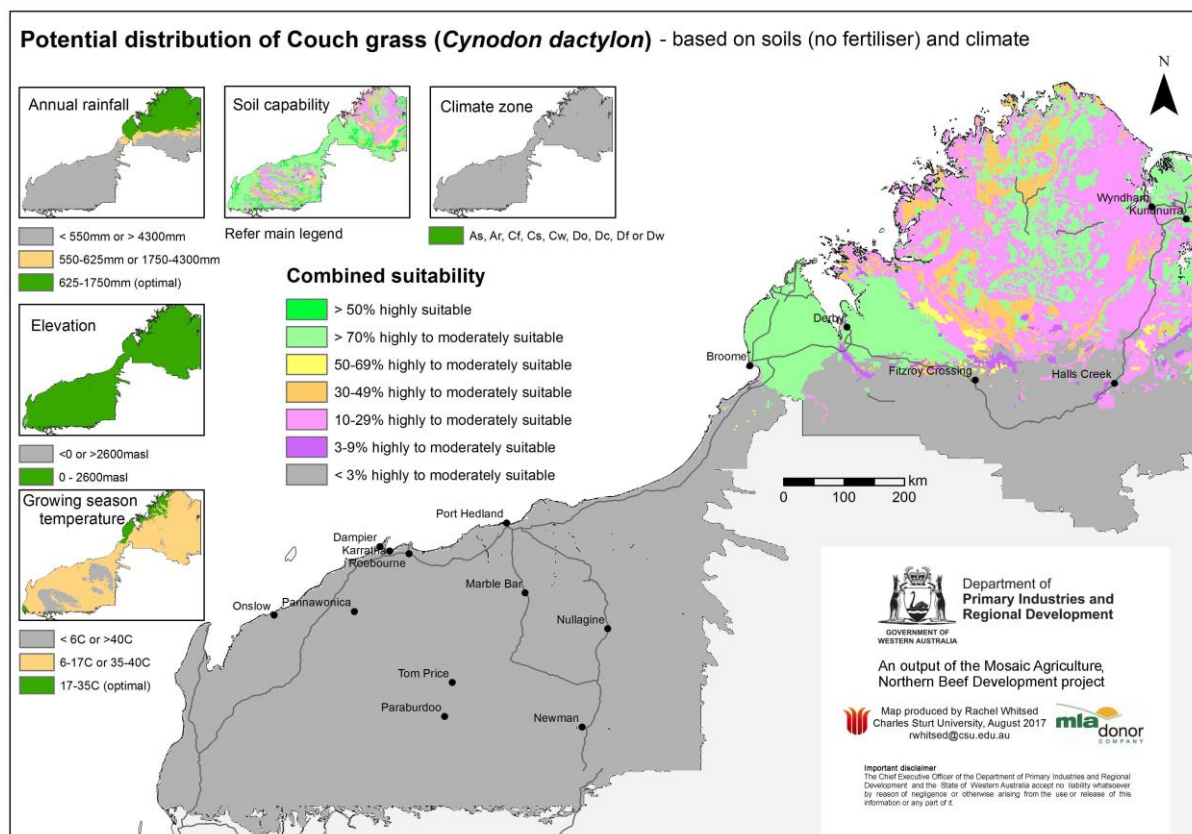
Figure 1 Distribution of couch grass (*Cynodon dactylon**) in Australia (Source: ‘The Australasian Virtual Herbarium’)

Note: *Includes both native and exotic types

Invasiveness and Impacts scores by Rod Randall

Invasiveness score	Impacts score
9.3	6.0

Potential distribution



Region	Area of suitable soils and climate (million ha)	Potential distribution score
Kimberley (>550mm AAR*)	9.67Mha	7.0
Kimberley (<550mm AAR)	0	0.5
Pilbara	0	0.5
Gascoyne – Goldfields	0	0.5

*AAR – Average annual rainfall

Overall weed risk assessment (exotic *Cynodon dactylon*)

Region	WRA calculation*	Weed risk score	WRA rating
Kimberley (>550mm AAR)	9.3 x 6.0 x 7.0	389	Very high
Kimberley (<550mm AAR)	9.3 x 6.0 x 0.5	27.8	Negligible-low
Pilbara	9.3 x 6.0 x 0.5	27.8	Negligible-low
Gascoyne – Goldfields	9.3 x 6.0 x 0.5	27.8	Negligible-low

* Invasiveness (0-10) x Impacts (0-10) x Potential Distribution (0-10) = Weed risk score (0-1000)

References

Hussey BMJ, Keighery GJ, Dodd J, Lloyd SG, Cousens RD (2007) 'Western weeds. A guide to the weeds of Western Australia'. Second Edition. The Weeds Society of Western Australia Inc.

Keighery G, Longman V (2004) The naturalized vascular plants of Western Australia 1: Checklist, environmental weeds and distribution in IBRA regions. *Plant Protection Quarterly*, **19(1)**: 12-32.

Weeds of Australia database

https://keyserver.lucidcentral.org/weeds/data/media/Html/trifolium_repens.htm Site accessed 8 June 2022

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