



Environmental weed risk assessment

Phalaris (*Phalaris aquatica*)

Phalaris is a winter-active, temperate perennial grass native to the Mediterranean region which was introduced into Australia in the late 1800s. It is widely grown in pastures in south-eastern Australia but is a minor pasture species in high rainfall south-western Australia. Phalaris requires annual rainfall greater than 500mm and a growing season longer than 6 months to persist (Sanford 2006).

Phalaris has become naturalised and is common along roadsides in high rainfall areas of south-western Australia, particularly on medium-textured soils formed on fresh rock. Phalaris is a cool season grass and is unsuited to northern Western Australia (WA) even under irrigation.

Weed lists

National-international:

- Not listed in Weeds of Australia (398 weed species) <https://weeds.org.au/weeds-profiles/>
- “Phalaris is widely naturalised in southern and eastern Australia (i.e. in eastern New South Wales, the ACT, Victoria, Tasmania, south-eastern South Australia and south-western Western Australia).
...regarded as an environmental weed in Victoria, South Australia and New South Wales. It was also recently listed as a priority environmental weed in three Natural Resource Management regions. This species has been widely cultivated as a pasture grass in the temperate regions of Australia, particularly on the New South Wales tablelands. It is a weed of pastures, grasslands, open woodlands, roadsides, waste areas, disturbed sites, creek banks, riparian vegetation, floodplains and wetlands in the temperate and cooler sub-tropical regions of Australia” Weeds of Australia website [Fact sheet Index \(lucidcentral.org\)](#)
- In the Global Compendium of Weeds, phalaris is listed as an agricultural weed, casual alien, cultivation escape, environmental weed, naturalised, noxious weed, weed (Randall 2017).

Western Australia:

- “...A pasture grass, it occurs in pastures, drains, verges and disturbed sites from Moora to Narembeen, Albany and Manjimup...” (Hussey et al. 2007).
- Recorded as naturalised in the following IBRA Regions of WA: Geraldton sandplains, Avon wheatbelt, Swan coastal plain, Jarrah forest, Mallee and Warren (Keighery and Longman 2004).
- Naturalised taxa from nature reserves in WA (Keighery 1991).



Figure 1 Distribution of phalaris (*Phalaris aquatica*) in Australia (Source: 'The Australasian Virtual Herbarium')

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Assessed using the 'Environmental weed risk assessment protocol for growing non-indigenous plants in the Western Australian rangelands' (Moore et al. 2022)

Region	Filter A	Filter B	Weed Risk Assessment rating
	Is the species a weed in similar environments in Australia or overseas?	Is the species likely to persist in the environment without management*?	
Kimberley	No	No	Negligible to low
Pilbara	No	No	Negligible to low
Gascoyne – Goldfields	No	No	Negligible to low
Agricultural area	Yes	Yes (>500mm AAR)	TBD

*Without management means no fertiliser, Rhizobia, irrigation, grazing management or control of competition from other species

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 GJ (1991) Environmental weeds of Western Australia. *Kowari*, **2**: 180-188.
- 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.
- Moore G, Munday C, Barua P (2022) 'Environmental weed risk assessment protocol for growing non-indigenous plants in the Western Australian rangelands', Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, *Bulletin no. 4924*, Perth.
- Randall RP (2017) 'Global compendium of weeds' (No. Ed. 3).

Sanford P (2006) Chapter 4, Temperate grasses. *In* 'Perennial pastures for Western Australia'. (Ed. GA Moore, P Sanford and T Wiley). Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, Western Australia, Perth. Bulletin 4690.

Weeds of Australia database

https://keyserver.lucidcentral.org/weeds/data/media/Html/trifolium_repens.htm Site accessed 30 November 2021

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