

# African lovegrass

## *Eragrostis curvula*

### Family

Poaceae (grass)

### Also known as

Weeping lovegrass, Boer lovegrass, fyngrass, *Poa curvula*

### Where is it originally from?

Africa

### What does it look like?

Variable, densely tufted, tussock-like, erect or prostrate perennial grass (<1.5 m tall) with fibrous roots (<50 cm deep) that is deciduous in cold areas. Narrow, rough, bright green to blue-green (blushes bronze-red after hard frost) hair-like leaves (3-7mm wide) are rolled inwards, and usually curly at tips. Seedheads with blackish, olive purplish seeds, ripening to greyish in summer, are usually loose, airy hanging clusters (<30 cm x <20 cm), on arching stems (<1 m long). Several varieties occur in New Zealand, and harshness and palatability to animals varies widely.

### Are there any similar species?

This is the only grass with blackish seeds and curly leaf tips.

### Why is it weedy?

Long-lived, fast growing and maturing. Produces massive numbers of highly viable, well-dispersed seeds that germinate spring and autumn. Tolerates fire, disturbance, hot temperatures to hard frost, poor and acidic soils, and while intolerant of wet soil, grows rapidly through droughts.

### How does it spread?

Seeds are spread in wind, and on vehicles, stock and people. Reseeds prolifically after fire, spraying or mechanical disturbance.

### What damage does it do?

Rapidly invades bare and disturbed sites and forms dense stands that prevent the establishment of native species.

### Which habitats is it likely to invade?

Steep, dry sites, short and tall tussockland, coastal areas, riverbeds, offshore and inshore islands, cliffs, and herbfields, potentially throughout New Zealand.

### What can I do to get rid of it?

1. Dig out isolated plants (all year round). Dispose of at refuse transfer station or burn.
2. Spray (spring-summer): glyphosate (15ml/L + penetrant, non-selective) or 520g/L haloxyfop-P-methyl (150ml/10L, selective).

### What can I do to stop it coming back?

Difficult to control, repeat treatments every 3 months needed. Minimise disturbance, exclude stock. Densely plant with shade-forming species where appropriate.



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Photo: Trevor James



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