Dwarf Parramatta grass – also just called Parramatta grass – is a tough perennial clumping grass which has low palatability for grazing animals.

It is very competitive for water and nutrients, giving it an advantage over other pasture plants, leading to pasture degradation.

The tough leaves also make slashing and mowing difficult.

It is commonly seen along roadsides, the edges of paths and driveways, and in disturbed sites and wastelands with compacted soils.

Description

Dwarf Parramatta grass is a coarse, tussocky perennial grass that grows to a height of 50cm and reproduces from seed.

The seed head is a slaty-green colour, up to 20cm long and resembles a rat's tail.

The branches of the seed head are tightly packed and can be a black colour if it is infected with a black fungal smut.

Flowering occurs through the warmer parts of the year, with the main seeding in late summer / autumn. Leaves are dark green, slender and stiff to 18cm long. Growth slows or stops over winter.

It can be confused with other Sporobolus species – such as giant rat's tail grass and Giant Parramatta grass – however these two weedy Sporobolus grasses generally grow to about 1m in height, compared to 50cm for the dwarf Parramatta grass.

Management

Most small infestations can be removed manually. It is important to ensure that seed heads are cut off and bagged before pulling or chipping.

If you would like further information on the control of dwarf Parramatta grass, look at the A–Z Listing of Weeds at Queensland Government Website.