Para grass is a common weed in many cane growing areas. It has been used in tropical locations as a fodder species, especially as a ponded pasture in beef production.

This plant can be a very aggressive invader, particularly in low-lying ungrazed areas and in sugar cane crops. It is often found in wet situations, especially drains, but will also grow in deep soils in non-swampy areas. The ability to thrive in wet areas highlights this species as a potential threat to natural wetland ecosystems. Native plants are significantly displaced by the vigorous growth of this weed. It also invades areas of disturbed remnant vegetation on suitable soils.

Para grass is an invasive plant which can disrupt native flora communities and ecosystems.

**Description**

This weed is a perennial grass up to about 1m tall. The stems are hollow and robust, creeping in a prostrate growth habit. These stems stand erect towards the ends, and sprout new roots wherever the nodes touch the ground.

Leaf blades are hairy and dark green in colour. They are usually up to 15cm long and less than 1cm wide, tapering to a long, fine point. The leaf sheaths are also hairy, particularly where they join the stem.

Flower heads are up to 18cm long and are made up of several spikes, each about 5cm long.

Seeds cluster thickly along each of these spikes, although para grass seldom sets seed in southern Queensland.

**Management**

Grazing para grass prevents it dominating other vegetation.

If manual control unsuccessful or large infestation herbicide control may be required. If treating para grass in an aquatic situation, be sure to only use products registered for that particular use (not in waterways deeper than 60 cm).

**Reference:** Land Protection (Invasive Plants and Animals), 2007, “PP90, Weed Busters Fact Sheet”, The State of Queensland, Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries.