



The California Invasive Plant Council Student Chapter recommends that you

DON'T PLANT BERMUDA GRASS



Photos: Keir Morse and Luigi Rignanesi

Scientific Name: *Cynodon dactylon*

Description:

Bermuda grass is a non-native, invasive grass that has been often used for turf grass in lawns throughout the lower continental US. It is a long-lived, warm season perennial grass that forms dense mats and spreads through seeds and vegetative rhizomes. It prefers full sun and can form dense sod quickly after establishment.

Impact:

Bermuda grass forms dense, large mats that can alter soil characteristics in a way that effectively crowds out native grasses and flowers. It may be slightly poisonous to certain farm animals and is a major contributor to hay fever. Though not known to be a rapid spreader, it has multiple ways of spreading and is difficult to eradicate once established.

Native Range:

Asia/Eastern Africa

Invaded Range:



Control Methods:

Bermuda grass can be controlled non-chemically through persistent hand removal and increased shading from trees or large shrubs. Not watering it through the summer can effectively desiccate additional growth. Covering with black plastic or other solarizing fabric is good for large areas. Grass-selective and non-selective herbicides that are applied post-emergence will also work but the seeds in the soil must be treated after herbicide application with shade and/or more herbicide as new grasses emerge.

Good Sacramento area alternatives



Santa Barbara sedge
Carex barbarae

Grass-like plant that grows well under shade and in moist areas. Rich dark red-green color with distinctive florets. Stabilizes ground and suppresses fire. Grows 2'-2.5'.



Idaho fescue
Festuca idahoensis

Drought resistant, persistently regenerative grass that excels at soil erosion control. Can survive in a multitude of habitats, weather regimes, soil types, etc. Grows up to 2'.



Purple needlegrass
Nassella pulchra

California's state grass. A perennial, clumped grass that grows up to 2'. Requires little water to establish and is very drought-adapted. Re-seeds readily.



June grass
Koeleria macrantha

Long-lived, perennial bunch grass that can grow up to 2'. Has eye-catching, dense flower spikes. Can grow on a variety of soils in a variety of habitats.

Other great native grasses good for lawns include: slender sedge, California fescue, nodding needlegrass, foothill needlegrass, California onion grass, and blue wildrye

Photos: Irene Lindsey, Keir Morse, and Carol Witham

References:

- California Horticultural Invasives Prevention (Cal-HIP) -<http://www.plantright.org/>
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