



Australian Government
Department of Agriculture,
Fisheries and Forestry



Weeds of National Significance

Gamba grass



National best practice management manual for
gamba grass (*Andropogon gayanus*)



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Weeds of National Significance
2024

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Cataloguing data

This publication (and any material sourced from it) should be attributed as: Sheehan, M, Potter, S. (2024). National best practice management manual for gamba grass (*Andropogon gayanus*). Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Canberra. CC BY-NC-ND 4.0.

ISBN 978-0-6456718-6-5 (pdf)
ISBN 978-0-6456718-7-2 (print)

This publication is available at weeds.org.au

Acknowledgements

This publication was funded by the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry.

This publication was produced by Wild Matters Pty. Ltd.

Wild Matters Pty. Ltd.
10 Templeton Street
Castlemaine Vic 3450

Web: wildmatters.com.au

Cover images: Front – Glenn Campbell (fire), Matt Sheehan (gamba grass inflorescence); Back – NESP (invasion), Rowena Eastick (foliar spraying)

Design and typeset by R.G. and F.J. Richardson, Melbourne, Victoria

Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of Australia and their continuing connection to land and sea, waters, environment and community. We pay our respects to the Traditional Custodians of the lands we live and work on, their culture, and their Elders past and present.

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Acknowledgements

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Valuable support, comments, information and/or review provided by

National Gamba Grass Reference Group

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Additional information sources

The authors would like to give special recognition to the work of the former national coordinator for gamba grass, Nathan March. During his time as national coordinator, Nathan created networks, compiled information, raised awareness and promoted best practice management of gamba grass. The information, knowledge and networks established by Nathan and the former national gamba grass taskforce were heavily drawn upon in the development of this manual.

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Gamba grass invasion near Batchelor, Northern Territory.

Using this manual

Who should use this manual?

This manual has been written to assist land managers with responsibility for, or general interest in, managing gamba grass (*Andropogon gayanus*). This manual is intended to help people make decisions about gamba grass management in the context of broader land management in northern Australia, by providing a guide based on current knowledge and understanding of best practice. It's designed to support other valuable resources that are available at the state/territory, regional and local government levels.

Where does the information come from?

The information in this manual has been sourced from published material, existing research and reviews by technical experts. It also incorporates information gathered at workshops and meetings held with individuals and organisations managing gamba grass throughout northern Australia in 2022 and 2023.

This manual aims to provide a synthesis of the most up-to-date information on best practice management of gamba grass. However, we acknowledge that our understanding of gamba grass spread, impacts and management will continue to improve with new research and adaptive management.

How to use this manual

This manual has been designed to allow easy access to information and provide the necessary knowledge and tools to successfully manage gamba grass.

Arranged in five stand-alone yet complementary chapters, the manual presents a guide to the ecology and impacts of gamba grass (Chapter 1), how to plan a gamba grass management program (Chapter 2), how to reduce the spread of gamba grass and manage its impacts (Chapter 3) and case study



WoNS

WEEDS OF
NATIONAL
SIGNIFICANCE

Strategy and policy context

Gamba grass is one of 32 Weeds of National Significance (WoNS). These species are identified as nationally significant based on assessments of their invasiveness, potential for spread, and environmental, social and economic impacts. WoNS require coordinated and strategic management to prevent, eradicate, contain and minimise their impact. The *Gamba grass national strategic plan 2012–17* was developed with the goals of (i) preventing new infestations from establishing, (ii) ensuring established infestations are under strategic management and (iii) increasing capacity to manage gamba grass (Australian Weeds Committee, 2013). Further information on WoNS can be found at the Weeds Australia website.

Gamba grass is listed as a Key Threatening Process under the Australian *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*. A national threat abatement plan outlines the priority actions required to reduce the threat gamba grass poses to biodiversity of northern Australia. Gamba grass is also listed as one of the key threats to Australia's biodiversity in the national *Threatened species action plan 2022–2032*, which has a goal of reducing the area of gamba grass by 2026.

examples of how gamba grass is being managed across northern Australia (Chapter 4). Chapter 5 provides sources of further information and supporting material that may be useful.

It's important that the information provided in this manual is adapted by individuals to reflect their own environmental, financial and social circumstances and any legislative management requirements that may apply. Always seek local advice in planning weed control on your property or the sites you manage.



Darryn Higgins

Gamba grass control, Cape York Peninsula, Queensland.

Summary of the five chapters

1. Understanding gamba grass and its impacts

- identification
- invaded habitats and distribution
- life cycle
- impacts

2. Setting yourself up for success (planning)

- the importance of planning
- how to prioritise areas for control
- how to develop a management plan

3. Managing gamba grass

- management principles and challenges
- choosing a control method
- preventing weed entry and spread
- physical, herbicide and other control methods

4. Case studies

- what other land managers are doing
- applying integrated weed management
- overcoming challenges
- practical tips and learnings

5. Further information

- identification of co-occurring grasses
- additional planning information
 - declaration status of gamba grass in Australia
 - planning templates, evaluation question and health and safety considerations
- additional management tools
 - useful contacts
 - herbicide use, training and certification
- references