

## Invasive Species Profile: Torpedo grass (*Panicum repens*)

### Identifying Characteristics

Perennial grass growing to 3 feet tall. White or brownish rhizomes often thick as a pencil, with hard torpedo-like tips that creep along the ground or float; may be several feet in length. Aerial stems are wrapped in sheaths, which are rough to the touch and hairy near the top. Leaf blades are less than 1/4 inches wide and pale green with hairs on the upper surface. Blades are often rolled inward, but may also be flat. The inflorescence is branched and open, about 3 to 9 inches long and 2 to 5 inches wide; flowers year-round.

### Habitat

Found in citrus groves, golf courses, and near water. Occurs in marshy areas and shallow fresh water; will form floating mats on water. Also a common nuisance in residential hedges and planted beds.

### Growth Habits

Quickly dominates and displaces native vegetation. Thrives in moist sandy or organic soils, but tolerates heavy upland soils. Will also tolerate drought and partial shade. Spreads primarily by aggressive rhizomes, but may spread by seed. Fertilizer and tilling may also stimulate spreading.



### Control Methods --- Foliar

Avoid tilling and cultivation, as this stimulates grass growth. Apply glyphosate in late fall when leaves are bright green. Reapplications are necessary.

### Florida-Friendly Replacements:

#### **For dry areas:**

Muhly grass (*Muhlenbergia capillaris*)  
Purple love grass (*Eragrostis spectabilis*)  
Elliott's love grass (*Eragrostis elliottii*)  
Sand cordgrass (*Spartina bakeri*)

#### **For wet areas:**

Maidencane (*Panicum hemitomon*)  
Seashore paspalum (*Paspalum vaginatum*)