

Paspalum paspalodes



Taxon	Family / Order / Phylum
<i>Paspalum paspalodes</i> (Michx) Scribner	Poaceae / Poales / Plantae

COMMON NAMES (English only)

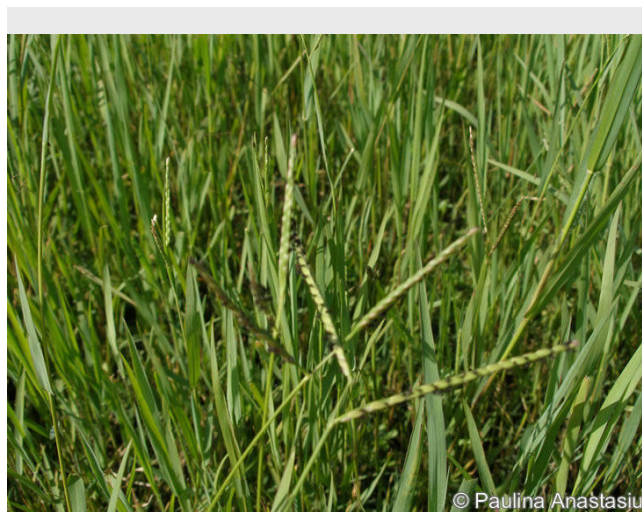
Knotgrass
Mercer grass
Water couch
Buffalo quick paspalum
Couch paspalum

SYNONYMS

Paspalum distichum L.
Digitaria paspalodes Michx
Digitaria disticha (L.) Fiori & Paolletti
Digitaria disticha (L.) Fiori ex Fiori & Paol.
Paspalum distichum L. subsp. *paspalodes* (Michx.) Thell.

SHORT DESCRIPTION

It is a creeping stoloniferous perennial herb, up to 50 cm tall; leaves are stiff, narrow, about 10 cm in length, with sheaths ciliate on margin (Clayton 1994). Usually every inflorescence has two racemes 1.5-7 cm, with ovate, pale-green spikelets. The upper glume is appressed and puberulent. It is adapted to marshy, brackish conditions and saline soils, which are moist in summer.



Close-up of *Paspalum paspalodes*

Photo: Paulina Anastasiu

BIOLOGY/ECOLOGY

Dispersal mechanisms

The productivity of seeds is low. Fragments of rhizomes or creeping stems could be water dispersed.

Reproduction

Mainly vegetative, from the spreading and sprouting of rhizomes. Also, creeping stem root at the nodes and give rise to flowering stems. It flowers freely in summer, but some clones are markedly self-sterile so that little seed is produced. Some clones are reasonably self-fertile and cross-pollination between clones may result in satisfactory seed set.

Known predators/herbivores

Good fodder for cattle and even for horses.

Resistant stages (seeds, spores etc.)

Stolons and rhizomes survive over the winter season. Rhizomes can also survive fire.

HABITAT

Native (EUNIS code)

A littoral species occurring in sands and muds near the seashore, and in saline soils and swamps.

Habitat occupied in invaded range (EUNIS code)

Fresh or brackish marshes, coastal salt marshes, ponds, ditches, shorelines, beaches, and dunes (A2: Littoral sediments, C1: Surface standing waters, C3: Surface running waters.)

Habitat requirements

It needs moist areas and summer rains, but persists during dry season; it tolerates environmental extremes and grows well in shade.

DISTRIBUTION

Native Range

Tropical Africa and America

Known Introduced Range

Europe (Albania, Azores, Bulgaria, France, Greece, Italy, Macedonia, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Turkey, UK, Ukraine), Australia, New Zealand




Trend

Even though it is a tropical weed it is increasing its distribution in Europe (in 1992 reported from Romania in Danube Delta, then in 2005 from Moldova Veche Islet in Danube Gorge).

MAP (European distribution)



Legend

	Known in country		Known in CGRS square		Known in sea
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INTRODUCTION PATHWAY

It is a commodity contaminant. In some regions it has been introduced intentionally for erosion control.

IMPACT

Ecosystem Impact

Its dense populations can cover large surfaces in a short time, competing very successfully with other weeds.

Health and Social Impact

Economic Impact

It is a harmful weed in rice fields. Sometimes it can be troublesome by blocking irrigation ditches.

MANAGEMENT

Prevention

Monitoring and early detection in susceptible habitats

Mechanical

The effective removal of knotgrass from invaded habitats is very difficult. Burning is not recommended.

Chemical

The best results have been obtained with fluazifop, quizalofop, glyphosate, and glufosinate

Biological

Unknown

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