

WANTED

FOUNTAIN GRASS

CALL 808-266-7994

Fountain grass fire on the Big Island



WHAT IS IT?

- Fountain grass (*Pennisetum setaceum*) is an African bunchgrass that is listed on the Hawai'i State noxious weed list.
- On O'ahu, fountain grass can be found on Diamond Head, Punchbowl and in Lanikai.
- **Fountain grass was recently found on a ridge in Mākua Valley and is being treated to remove it, but it will take many months of follow-up work to eliminate all of it.**

WHY IS IT A PROBLEM?

- **Fuels brush fires.** Fires could become more frequent and destructive if fountain grass spreads in Wai'anae. It poses a major threat to residential, agricultural and natural areas.
- **It's an invasive weed.** Fountain grass out-competes native Hawaiian plants which are not adapted to fire, and is easily spread by wind, animals, vehicles and people.

WHO IS OISC ?

- The O'ahu Invasive Species Committee (OISC) is a grassroots partnership **protecting O'ahu from invasive plants and animals that threaten our environment, economy and quality of life.**
- OISC focuses on species that are not widely established on this island and can still be controlled or eradicated.
- OISC partners include municipal, state and federal agencies.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- **Report** fountain grass sightings to OISC, who will properly remove and dispose of it.
- **Allow a fountain grass survey on your property** by an OISC field crew, if asked. According to Hawai'i state law, landowners are not liable for workers surveying for or removing invasive species.
- **Do not plant, import, buy, or sell it.**
- **Stop the spread** of seeds; wash boots after each hike.



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FOUNTAIN GRASS INCREASES THE RISK OF WILDFIRES!

- Areas dominated by this plant may suffer hotter and more frequent wildfires.



Wai'anae Valley after the 2012 wildfires. Fountain grass could easily invade these recently burned areas. Photo: D. Smith/DLNR

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- **Protect your community!** Your help is needed to keep a look out for and report if you see fountain grass plants anywhere in Wai'anae.
- **Report all sightings** to OISC at 266-7994 or oisc@hawaii.edu.
- If you can, PLEASE take a photo and send it to oisc@hawaii.edu. Note the location as exactly as possible. Do not remove the plant; OISC will remove and safely dispose of it.

HOW TO IDENTIFY FOUNTAIN GRASS?

- Distinctive fountain-like shape.
- Dense bunchgrass as high as 4 feet tall
- Leaves are narrow, stiff and rough, up to 2 ft long.
- Flowers are bunched together in a spike-like, cylinder shape that is pink to purplish in color.

WHAT LOOKS SIMILAR?

- **Buffel grass (*Cenchrus ciliaris*):** Usually shorter. Flowering branches shorter and more brown. More of a mound of grass than a fountain shape. A non-native grass that is already widespread on O'ahu.



- **Kawelu grass (*Eragrostis variabilis*):** Shorter, leaves wider. Flowering branches more of a golden color. Seeds larger and easily seen. A native grass.



OISC

O'AHU INVASIVE SPECIES COMMITTEE

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