



Report this pest



African feather grass

Why is it a pest?

African feather grass produces large amounts of seeds that are easily spread by wind and water.

These seeds have barbed bristles that can catch in animal hair and clothing. It also spreads through rhizomes (underground fleshy stems) when they are moved by machinery, cultivation, or dumped plant material and soil. It can quickly crowd out other low-growing plant species and impact our production and economic values.

In Otago, there is one known site with African feather grass — this is in coastal North Otago. As African feather grass is an exclusion species, this site will be subject to a rigorous incursion response process led by ORC.



What does it look like?

- **Size:** African feather grass looks like any tussocky grass and forms thick clumps up to 2 metres high.
- **Leaves:** Whitish green on top, ribbed, and dark green underneath. The leaf edges feel rough when touched, and the casing is covered in hairs.
- **Flower/seeds:** The flowers form a long, thin, straw-yellow colour spike, sometimes with a purplish tinge. The seeds have bristles that allow them to become easily attached to clothing, animal hair or wool.
- **Root system:** African feather grass produces lengthy, fibre-like roots and stems that will form new shoots.
- **Habitat:** Includes open areas, shrubland, grassland, coastal areas, cliffs, riparian margins, gravel beds, wasteland, and roadsides.

Common name:

African feather grass

Scientific name:

Cenchrus macrourus

Management programme:

Exclusion

The exclusion programme aims to stop certain pests that are in very low numbers or in surrounding areas from establishing in Otago.



**Report
this pest!**

If you have seen or suspect the presence of this pest, you **must report** the sighting to us at orc.govt.nz/reportpests

When can I spot it best?

As its flower is quite distinctive, it's easiest to spot when in bloom from December to April.

What are the rules?

To prevent the establishment of African feather grass in Otago and its negative environmental and economic effects, African feather grass is in the exclusion programme of the Otago Regional Pest Management Plan (2019-2029).

All *Cenchrus* species, including African feather grass are declared unwanted organisms in the National Pest Plant Accord (NPPA).

Any species declared a pest under the NPPA cannot be sold or be in a place where plants are being sold. Pest plants cannot be propagated, bred, multiplied, communicated, released, caused to be released, or otherwise spread.

What should I do?

Do not attempt to undertake control of African feather grass yourself. Report any sightings to Otago Regional Council.



PHOTO: ANDY STEED

Report this pest



Help us find African feather grass

You must notify Otago Regional Council if you suspect the presence of this pest.

If you think you've seen it:



Note the location



Take a photo
(if possible)



Report this pest
at orc.govt.nz/reportpests

For more information, visit orc.govt.nz/africanfeathergrass

