

Panicum maximum

Guineagrass

Panicum maximum Jacq.

Family: Poaceae

Description: Shade tolerant perennial, grows in dense bunches, up to 9 ft tall, hairy or not, but densely hairy at nodes. Sheaths hairy or not except densely hairy at collar. Ligules very short fringed membrane. Leaves up to 3 ft long by 1 inch wide. Inflorescences open panicles, capable of producing 9000 seeds per plant. Germination rate is low unless the seeds are stored dry for 6 months or more. Seed produced asexually (apomictic), hence local populations tend to be genetically uniform. Worldwide, there are many varieties. An important forage species. “Green Panic,” a variety also introduced for grazing, is shorter. *Panicum* is a Latin name for a millet; *maximus*, largest^(5, 26, 70).

Distribution: From Africa, occurs in the tropics and subtropics under 40–70 inches annual rainfall with dry seasons less than 4 months long. Widely distributed because of its forage value. A serious weed in tropical and subtropical crops and wastelands. Very common in open disturbed areas of forests, wastelands, and roadsides throughout its range, including Hawai‘i, in mesic to humid lowlands. Naturalized in Hawai‘i by 1871^(26, 70).



Environmental impact: Grows into tall dense stands, displaces natives, a fire hazard in dry periods.

Management: Susceptible to glyphosate, including drizzle application. Young plants are susceptible to selective grass-killers.