

# Panicum repens

## Torpedograss, wainakugrass

*Panicum repens* L.

Family: Poaceae

**Description:** Creeping perennial to 4 ft tall, usually smooth. Stems typically unbranched, round in cross-section, hard. Ligule a very short membrane fringed with hairs. Leaves up to 15 inches long, 0.3 inches wide. Panicles to 7 inches long, open but produces few viable seed. Spreads vegetatively primarily from runners (rhizomes), often swollen, as long as 22 ft<sup>(26, 70)</sup>. *Repens*, creeping<sup>(5)</sup>.

**Distribution:** From the Old World Tropics, occurs along the U.S. Gulf Coast. A serious weed in many tropical and subtropical countries in crops, pastures, and natural areas<sup>(26)</sup>. In Hawai‘i, it infests coastal sites and mesic to high-rainfall environments on O‘ahu, Lana‘i, and Hawai‘i<sup>(70)</sup>. Can be seen on the shoreline of Wailoa Pond in Hilo.

**Environmental impact:** A serious weed in field and perennial crops. Not palatable to livestock. Forms thick dense stands that smother low plants. Cannot stand waterlogging but capable of invading even brackish ponds from shore<sup>(26)</sup>.



**Management:** Difficult because of extensive rhizomes beneath soil surface. Tillage only encourages its growth. Sensitive to glyphosate and imazapyr but will require repeat treatments.