

Spartina

Spartina anglica

Also called cord grass

Poaceae (grass family)

Identification:

Spartina is an estuarine grass species. A grass that looks similar to spartina, and may also be found in some similar locations to spartina, is tall fescue. The two are compared in the table below:



	spartina	tall fescue
auricles - claw/ear-like projection at blade base	no auricles	auricles, with short hairs
ligule - membrane or fringe of hairs at base of blade where leaf-sheath joins the leaf-blade	ligule 2-3 mm with a dense fringe of hairs	ligule 0.5-1-3 mm not hairy
leaf blade	5-40 cm x 5-12 mm leaf edges smooth at least some leaves drooping	10-100 cm x 5-10 mm wide leaf edges harsh/cutty to touch leaves stiffly spreading
habitat - environment where it is found	estuaries, especially around mid-tide and in salt marsh	river beds and banks, waste places



Where does it grow?

Spartina is native to Britain. It grows in estuaries in the inter-tidal zone, and along the margin of the tidal reaches of rivers (e.g. Avon and Heathcote Rivers). It has also been found at the head of Lyttelton Harbour where it is being controlled.



Why is it a problem?

Dense stands of spartina exclude other species, and increase sedimentation. Eventually spartina will take over the whole of the inter-tidal zone if left uncontrolled.

Status

There is an eradication programme in place to remove all spartina from Canterbury - please **report all** plant sightings. If unsure, **collect** some for identification.

Control

For more information, to report a spartina sighting or identification details, please contact weeds@ecan.govt.nz

