

Sunset Acres II

HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER



ARIZONA WILDFIRE SEASON

The state of Arizona no longer has a wildfire season. Factors including drought produce a year-round fire season. The threat is not only to wildlands; but also washes, natural land areas, and our neighborhoods.

Invasive buffelgrass adds to the fire danger. It is a fire-prone, exotic grass; burning at 1300-1600 °F and supports a rapid rate of fire spread.

Northwest Fire District reports a unique challenge when fighting a buffelgrass fire as the fuel supports flame lengths of 15 to 25-feet.

NATIVE VS INVASIVE GRASS

Many grasses are native to Arizona. Invasive species compete with native plants and grasses for vital nutrients and threaten a desert that historically has been regarded as "fire-proof".

The aggressively seeding buffelgrass produces exponential rates of growth quickly overtaking desert ecosystems.

Tucson Clean & Beautiful Inc., the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum, and the National Park Service offer online brochures detailing how to tell the difference between native and invasive grasses. See backside for more info!

ERADICATION TECHNIQUES

Invasive grasses, especially buffelgrass, thrive when cut, mowed, trimmed, and burned.

The most effective control methods include pulling it out (including roots) and herbicide control using at least 2% Glyphosate (only works if the plant is at least 50% green).






The seeds are hearty; thus eradication will need to continue for 3-5 growing seasons to remove all of the seeds from the soil in the area.



PULLING BUFFELGRASS OUT

1. Use a soil digging bar to check for snakes.
2. One person grabs the grass, ready to tug.
3. Another jabs the soil around the base of the grass clump with the bar to loosen the roots.
4. Once the roots give way, pull the root ball and grass stems.
5. Bag grass clump and root ball and dispose.

How to know your grasses. . .
 Look at the seed head or examine the rachis (seed head without seed).

				
Tanglehead <i>Heteropogon contortus</i> NATIVE	AZ Cottontop <i>Digitaria californica</i> NATIVE	Buffelgrass <i>Pennisetum ciliare</i> EXOTIC	Cane Bluestem <i>Bothriochloa barbinodis</i> NATIVE	Bristlegrass <i>Setaria species</i> NATIVE

Newsletter photos courtesy of the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum, National Park Service, and RRISC.org.

Do you have more buffelgrass questions? Email buffelgrass@desertmuseum.org for additional info.

Native or Exotic (invasive)?
How to tell the difference!
 The pictures on the front show how dramatically different Buffelgrass can look depending on the time of year.

Green Buffelgrass - The grass greens after rain events, is often taller than native grasses, and has a clumpy, messy appearance.

Dormant Buffelgrass - The grass will get golden brown during dry seasons and prior year growth may even look gray; old growth will stay upright while new growth fills in.

Flower - Buffelgrass has a distinct flower that looks like a bottle brush which can be reddish-purple colored, and then brown when the seeds are mature (see comparisons, left).

Free Presentation on Buffelgrass in AZ!

When: Tuesday, May 8, 2018; 6:00 p.m.
 Where: Wheeler Taft Abbett Senior Library
 7800 N. Schisler Drive, Tucson, AZ 85743

As a service to our community, Mr. Tom Ellis of Tucson Clean & Beautiful is scheduled to provide an approximate 30-minute presentation on buffelgrass history, impacts, identification and eradication. A question and answer period will follow. Community members and their guests are welcome to attend! Refreshments will be served.

Please check out your property for buffelgrass and take steps to remove the grass while it is a relatively manageable task.

Compliance Reminders:

- Please continue to observe posted speed limits and watch for pedestrians, pets, and playing children!
- Spring has sprung! Thank you for your attention to the pesky weeds/grass that are starting to pop up in our landscaped yards and next to the roads.
- Please take a quick glance at your mailbox, does it need repair, touch-up painting, a new post, a new flag? No ARC approval is needed to repair mailboxes. Help is available for those needing a hand, contact 400-9942.

