LEARN TO RECOGNISE SERRATED TUSSOCK
GET ON TOP OF INFESTATIONS AND DON’T LET IT SEED

Management Tips

• Seek and destroy all isolated plants. Record where plants have seeded and chase up daughter plants continually before they mature and set seed.
• Serrated tussock can be controlled all year round. The best time to control individual plants is when you find them.
• Adopt grazing practices and systems which allow pastures to be rested, thereby maintaining ground cover and increasing the competition from desirable species.
• If controlling serrated tussock by hand - chip out, expose roots and remove individual plants – avoid leaving any bare ground for seedling germination.
• Careful and strategic use of an approved herbicide can provide good control. For spot spraying individual plants, use Glyphosate 360 (10%/L) or Flupropanate.
• Take care that you don’t overspray and create bare ground around the tussock.
• If using herbicides on dense infestations or across large areas, have a follow-up plan for establishing a competitive pasture.
• Seek advice from you agronomist or Council Weeds Officer.

Identification Tips

Serrated tussock can be confused with native Poa tussocks or Spear grasses, which grow mainly during the cooler months of the year.
• Check out tussock grasses that are not normally grazed - they may be serrated tussock.
• Serrated tussock does not retain its seed heads – they are blown by the wind. Spear grasses usually retain some seed-stems through summer.
• Serrated tussock leaves are fine, parallel and needle-like. Leaves roll smoothly between the thumb and finger. Native tussock leaves are wider at the base (up to 3mm) and feel like they have edges when rolled between the fingers.
• Serrated tussock leaves cannot be unrolled. They are completely hairless and white at the base. Look for the ligule at the leaf junction (refer to photo 4).
• Serrated tussock maintains its spiky, often blonde appearance for most of the year. Native tussocks tend to remain green for much of the year.

Serrated Tussock Facts

Working against you

• Seed heads are easily moved by the wind and can be spread over large areas.
• Spreads through insidious encroachment by “daughter” plants germinating near older tussocks.
• Establishes in a ‘shot-gun’ manner with an initial scattering of daughter plants, rather than single patches.
• Once established, plants are tenacious and can be difficult to pull out.
• Extremely low palatability & feed quality (especially to sheep).
• Difficult to identify plants less than 1-2 years old, by which time they have probably seeded.
• Can be easily mistaken as a tussocky native grass.

Legal Obligations

Serrated Tussock is a listed noxious weed and must be controlled as required under the Noxious Weeds Act 1993.

For further information phone:
Bega Valley Shire Weed Officers 02 6499 2222
Eurobodalla Shire Weed Officers 02 4474 1000
Department of Primary Industries 02 6491 7800

Refer to:

This guide has been compiled by the Southern Rivers CMA with assistance from the Bega Valley Shire Council, Eurobodalla Shire Council, Dr Bill Johnston and the Farming For Weeds Suppression Project Steering Group August 2011.
### Identifying Serrated Tussock

#### TARGET
- **BE VIGILANT** - Learn what serrated tussock looks like and keep an eye out for it. Control established plants before they can set seed.
- Maintain > 80% ground cover to increase competition and therefore minimise seedling establishment.

#### PLANT STAGE
- **Plants have finished seeding and seedheads are being blown on the wind. Plants are erect and spiky, with a mixture of green and dead, yellow-coloured leaves.**
- **Plants are actively growing and start to set seed from late October.**
- **Plants are developing into spreading tussocks with a high proportion of dead leaves and blonde leaf-tips.**
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#### MONTH
- **JAN**
- **FEB**
- **MAR**
- **APR**
- **MAY**
- **JUN**
- **JUL**
- **AUG**
- **SEP**
- **OCT**
- **NOV**
- **DEC**

#### ACTION
- **Keep a look out for seedlings. Encourage the growth of summer growing perennial grasses such as kikuyu and native grasses.**
- **Destroy older plants in autumn and winter to prevent them from seeding.**
- **Monitor paddocks, especially exposed hillsides and the lee side of hills and ridges. Tussocks are often most obvious in mid winter. Manage for cool season species, especially clover. Aim for a vigorous pasture in spring, free of serrated tussock.**
- **Focus on the control of mature plants - aim for total eradication. Maintain vigilance for seedlings as well – be aware they can be difficult to identify during these months. Encourage the growth of summer growing perennial grasses such as kikuyu and native grasses.**
- **Introduce a grazing management system that does not overgraze desirable pasture species and allows paddocks to be rested. Reducing the size of paddocks can aid in managing grazing pressure better.**

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1. Serrated tussock characteristically contains a proportion of dead, straw coloured leaves mixed in with light to bright green leaves. This gives plants a blonde appearance which is more evident in winter months.

2. A non-flowering juvenile serrated tussock plant in late summer. Note the contrast between the bright green leaves and the older, straw coloured leaves. Serrations can be felt by rubbing the leaves from tip to base.

3. Purple seeds first appear in mid-spring within the foliage of the tussock.

4. The ligule is a small flap of tissue which is located at the junction of each leaf blade and the stem from which it arises. In serrated tussock the ligule is a small white flap about 1mm long, which can be seen sticking up at the leaf junction when the leaf blade is pulled back away from the stem. In the most similar looking native tussocks the ligule is not visible to the naked eye.

5. The bases of serrated tussock leaves are distinctly white. In many native tussocks and grasses, these leaf bases may have a purple or pink tinge.

6. The purple to mauve tinged seed heads are not erect - they are long and wispy and tend to blow over in the wind.

7. It can be difficult to distinguish serrated tussock from native Poa grasses. If you are unsure seek advice.