### 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 5mm) 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.
  - When identifying serrated tussock, check all distinguishing features.
  - If you are unsure, seek advice from your Shire Weed Officer or local agronomist.

### 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.
- Plants may be grazed in autumn making them difficult to spot.
- Seed may germinate up to 14 years later and can pass through animals unharmed.

#### Working for you
- Seedlings are numerous, but weak and not competitive when establishing.
- Establishes with difficulty and slowly in well-managed, vigorous pastures.
- Livestock avoid grazing tussocks, which over time can make them more visible and easier to identify.
- Can be effectively controlled throughout the year.
- With persistence and good management, serrated tussock is readily controllable. Many landholders have successfully controlled extensive infestations.

### Legal Obligations

Serrated Tussock is a listed noxious weed and must be controlled as required under the Noxious Weeds Act 1993.
Plants are actively growing. Leaves are tightly rolled and dullish olive-green in colour.

Management Calendar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TARGET</th>
<th>BE VIGILANT - Learn what serrated tussock looks like and keep an eye out for it. Control established plants before they can set seed.</th>
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<td>Maintain &gt; 80% ground cover to increase competition and therefore minimise seedling establishment.</td>
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**PLANT STAGE**

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<tr>
<th>MONTH</th>
<th>JAN</th>
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<tr>
<td>ACTION</td>
<td>Keep a look out for seedlings. Encourage the growth of summer growing perennial grasses such as kikuyu and native grasses.</td>
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<td>Destroy older plants in autumn and winter to prevent them from seeding.</td>
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<td>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.</td>
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**IDENTIFYING SERRATED TUSSOCK**

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.