



Spartina spp.

Common name: Cordgrass

Spartina spp. (spar-TIE-na) are aggressive invasive plant species that invade intertidal zones such as mudflats and beaches. These species can out-compete native plants to the extent that huge areas are covered in *Spartina* alone. The result is a loss of fish, shellfish and bird habitat, and a potential decline in native plant and animal populations and overall biodiversity. Certain species, such as *Spartina anglica*, also threaten a change in tidal patterns as their rhizomes (root system) trap sediment, increasing risk of flooding.

If you think you have found *Spartina*, or are interested in getting your organization involved, contact **River Works** at tel: 604.659.3503 or email: riverworks@vanaqua.org.

For more information about *Spartina*, check out our website:

www.spartina.ca

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES

- Perennial, salt-tolerant grass
- Bright green to grayish green
- Round, hollow stems
- Fine hairs at the ligule, which is a thin outgrowth at the junction of leaf and leafstalk
- Species originate in England, Chile, and Eastern US



PHOTOGRAPHY : G.L. WILLIAMS

The **Spartina Project** is managed by a consortium of concerned conservation leaders. As a group we are committed to the preservation of aquatic habitats through monitoring, restoration, research, education and public involvement. Since the discovery of *Spartina anglica* in Boundary Bay in 2003, staff, partners and volunteers have begun the annual task of mapping and manually removing this alien invader from local shorelines.

DUCKS UNLIMITED CANADA

VANCOUVER AQUARIUM—RIVER WORKS

B.C. MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT

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FRIENDS OF SEMIAHMOO BAY

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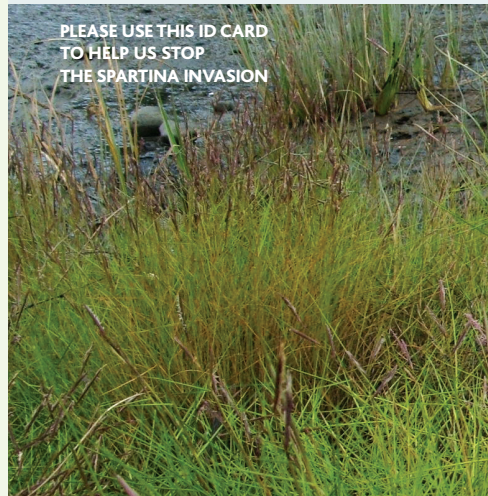
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INVASIVE ALIEN SPECIES PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM



BC SHORELINE INVASION

SPARTINA

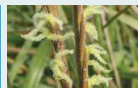


PLEASE USE THIS ID CARD
TO HELP US STOP
THE SPARTINA INVASION



Spartina anglica

English Cordgrass



DESCRIPTION

- Leaves: flat when fresh, 5-12mm wide and 5-40cm long
- Stems: tall, often reddish, up to 1.5m high
- Flower heads: resemble wheat, consisting of 2-12 "spikes" on one side only
- Growth pattern: circular clumps or clones
- Distinctive 45-90° angle between leaf blades and stem

ECOLOGY

- Habitat: ranges from mixed-vegetation marsh to mudflats where few other species will grow
- Flowering period: June through September

LOCATED (TO DATE)

- Fraser River delta mudflats



Spartina densiflora

Dense Flowered Cordgrass



DESCRIPTION

- Leaves: grayish, rolled inwards when fresh, 4-8mm wide and 12-43cm long
- Stems: up to 1.5m high
- Flower heads: 2-13 spikes, 60° from central axis
- Growth pattern: dense tufts

ECOLOGY

- Habitat: cobble beaches and salt marshes, in the mid- to high-marsh zone
- Flowering period: April through July
- *S. densiflora* has not yet been observed to out-compete native species, but must be monitored as it has the potential to do so

LOCATED (TO DATE)

- Fanny Bay and Ship's Point on Vancouver Island



Spartina patens

Saltmeadow Cordgrass



DESCRIPTION

- Leaves: rolled inwards when fresh, 1-4mm wide and 10-50cm long
- Stems: thin and flexible, up to 1.2m in height
- Flower heads: droopy and reddish in colour
- Growth pattern: forms dense mats

ECOLOGY

- Habitat: high marsh zone
- Flowering period: late summer

LOCATED (TO DATE)

- Comox area on Vancouver Island and Burrard Inlet in North Vancouver



Distichlis spicata

Seashore Saltgrass



DESCRIPTION *Don't mistake this native grass for Spartina!* It's similar in appearance to *Spartina* spp., but with several important differences:

- Leaves: yellowish-green, 2-4mm wide
- Stems: solid (not hollow), and short (10-40cm in height)
- Growth pattern: dense patches
- Ligule: has ridge with very small, dense bristles rather than fine hairs

ECOLOGY

- Habitat: salt marshes and seashores

LOCATED (TO DATE)

- Native to British Columbia