INVASIVE PLANT GUIDE FOR HOMEOWNERS IN FLORIDA

Cogongrass is one of the most frustrating invasive plants in Florida. It is highly flammable, tolerates drought and seasonal flooding, and appears to recover from just about everything land managers throw at it. This species requires more aggressive management efforts than most as the below ground stems must be physically removed or killed with an herbicide treatment.

Cogongrass
(Imperata cylindrica)

Leaves: Upright, pale green, one to four feet in height and are ½ to ¾ inches wide. They are sharply serrated and also have a white midvein that is off center. New leaves emerge from underground creeping stems called rhizomes. The new leaves emerge as purplish needle-like tips that are very sharp and rigid.

Flowers: Densely packed in a narrow cylindrical bloom that is white.

Seeds: Seeds are tiny, fluffy, white, and can be carried by wind.

Rhizomes: The belowground creeping stems are white, cylindrical and segmented with fine fibrous roots occasionally growing from them. They are generally in the top foot of soil, with most in the top six to eight inches.

AlterNATIVE Plants

These native groundcover species are alternatives that you can consider planting.

Switchgrass
(*Panicum virgatum*)

Pink Muly grass
(*Muhlenbergia capillaris*)

Eastern gamagrass
(*Tripsacum dactyloides*)

INVASIVE PLANT MANAGEMENT OPTIONS

Hand Pulling and Digging: Hand pulling is not effective as the leaves break near the soil surface, leaving the rhizomes behind. For small patches or flowerbeds, dig out the entire rhizome layer, being careful to remove all fragments. **Disposal:** Pile, dry and burn onsite if possible.

Mowing: Mowing is only suppressive and will not kill cogongrass, even when done weekly at a low mowing height.

Fire: Cogongrass is pyrogenic and rapidly resprouts after fire. It also burns extremely hot and may kill many trees and shrubs. Burning is NOT recommended for homeowners.

Grazing: Goats, cattle, and horses will only graze young leaves and will avoid mature plants due to the sharply serrated leaf margins. Grazing is not effective for long-term control.

Herbicides: Glyphosate is the most effective herbicide homeowners can use for foliar treatments. Glufosinate is an alternative but it is not as effective as glyphosate. Most grass specific herbicides such as sethoxydim (Poast) are not effective but repeated applications of fluazifop-P-butyl (Fusilade II) have been effective. Imazapyr is often used in forestry and rights- of-ways by professionals but is not recommended for homeowners due to a high potential for non-target injury to trees and shrubs. For glyphosate, late summer and fall treatments are most effective. However, the most important thing to remember is multiple treatments will be needed to completely kill the rhizomes.

Herbicide Products	Product Type	Active Ingredient	Application Technique
Farmworks 53.8% Glyphosate	Concentrate	Glyphosate (53.8%)	Foliar
Roundup Powermax 3	Concentrate	Glyphosate (51.2%)	
Roundup Pro Concentrate	Concentrate	Glyphosate (50.2%)	
Roundup ProMax	Concentrate	Glyphosate (48.7%)	
Compare and Save Weed and Grass Killer	Concentrate	Glyphosate (41%)	
Hi-Yield Super Concentrate Killzall Weed and Grass Killer	Concentrate	Glyphosate (41%)	
Tigris Glufosinate	Concentrate	Glufosinate (24.5%)	
Liquid Harvest 24.5% Glufosinate	Concentrate	Glufosinate (24.5%)	
Tide Glufosinate 280 SL	Concentrate	Glufosinate (24.5%)	
Bioadvanced Weed and Grass Killer	Concentrate	Glufosinate (11.33%)	
Fusilade II	Concentrate	Fluazifop-P-butyl (24.5%)	

Disclaimer: Use pesticides safely. Read and follow directions on the manufacturer's label. The use of trade names in this publication is solely for the purpose of providing specific information. UF/IFAS does not guarantee or warranty the products named, and references to them in this publication do not signify our approval to the exclusion of other products of suitable composition.

Non-target concerns for herbicide treatment: Directed sprays or shielded sprays are recommended around desirable vegetation for both glyphosate and glufosinate. Fluazifop-P-butyl is safe to use over the top of many ornamental plants that are specified on the label.

Follow-Up Management: For glyphosate and glufosinate, monitor and treat regrowth twice a year. For Fusilade II, retreatment on a quarterly basis may be necessary. To assess treatment success, dig up the rhizomes and look for firm, white tissue, which indicate they are still alive. Continue treating until all living rhizomes are killed.

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Each homeowner guide provides the information you need to get started with invasive plant control. By following these steps, you can feel more confident about navigating invasive plant control on your property.

1. Plant Identification

The first step is making sure that you have properly identified your target invasive plant.

2. Know Your Management Options

There are a variety of techniques and tools you can use to manage invasive plants such as hand pulling, mowing, prescribed fire, grazing and herbicide treatments. These techniques and tools vary in effectiveness depending on your specific situation.

Handpulling and mowing are options that require consistent and persistent management.

Prescribed fire is widely used on many natural areas in Florida, but most homeowners will not be able to utilize it as a tool due to local burning restrictions. Flamers are available for purchase and must be used with caution.

Grazing may not be an option as most homeowners do not have access to livestock. However, there are some land management companies who provide grazing services, so the section on grazing may be helpful to understand its usefulness.

If you choose to use **herbicides**, reading and following all label instructions is required by law. It is important to purchase the right herbicide product for your plant problem. The homeowner guides refer to herbicides as active ingredients, which are found in both concentrate and ready-to-use products sold by different brands. Be sure to read the "Directions for Use" section of the label attached to every product container.

Let's look at two examples that you might come across at the store. On the left is a concentrate and on the right is a ready-to-use product from different brands. Both contain the same active ingredient but in different amounts.

Concentrate Product

ACTIVE INGREDIENT	
Triclopyr, triethylamine salt	8.8%
OTHER INGREDIENTS	91.2%
TOTAL	100.0%

Ready-To-Use Product

ACTIVE INGREDIENT	
Triclopyr, triethylamine salt	0.8%
OTHER INGREDIENTS	99.2%
TOTAL	100.0%

3. Follow Up On Your Efforts

Finally, **follow-up management** is often overlooked. Invasive plants are persistent and usually require multiple attempts at management.

Questions? Contact Dr. Stephen Enloe at sfenloe@ufl.edu

UF/IFAS Center for Aquatic and Invasive Plants

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