Scientific Name: *Cenchrus longispinus* Common name: Spiny burr grass

QUESTION	COMMENTS	REFERENCE	RANKING
Social			
1. Restrict human access?	"An erect or spreading annual grass to 60 cm high. Inflorescence a spike-like panicle consisting of up to 40 burrs; spines sharply pointed, finely barbed, rigid to 7 mm long." The plant would not present any restrictions to human movement except when burrs are present (December to April). High nuisance value during this time of year.	P & C (2001)	**MH**
2. Reduce tourism?	Some recreational activities may be affected; burrs remain on the ground for several months after the plant dies.	Barnard, T. (pers. comms.)[1]	**MH**
3. Injurious to people?	"Spines can easily puncture the skin of animals." Similarly, may injure humans. Burrs present for much of the year.	P & C (2001)	**MH**
4. Damage to cultural sites?	An annual grass, it would have little effect on visual aesthetics or structure of cultural sites.		**L**
Abiotic			
5. Impact flow?	Terrestrial species.	P & C (2001)	**L**
6. Impact water quality?	Terrestrial species.	P & C (2001)	**L**
7. Increase soil erosion?	An annual grass, "the weed grows well on disturbed road edges and infests neglected areas and summer crops." Not likely to contribute to soil erosion in these situations.	P & C (2001)	**L**
8. Reduce biomass?	An annual grass, "the weed grows well on disturbed road edges and infests neglected areas and summer crops." Biomass replaced by invader	P & C (2001)	**ML**
9. Change fire regime?	"Spiny burr-grass forms tussocks up to 60 cm and more across. Most plants die in autumn or early winter." In dense patches the plant may increase the frequency of fire risk somewhat.	P & C (2001)	**ML**
Community Habitat			
10. Impact on composition (a) high value EVC	EVC=Heathy woodland (V); CMA=Wimmera; Bioreg=Goldfields; VH CLIMATE potential. Occupies open dry sandy conditions. Does not establish readily in pastures. Disturbance enhances invasiveness. Minor displacement of grass species.	P & C (2001)	**ML**
(b) medium value EVC	EVC=Sand heathland (R); CMA=Wimmera; Bioreg=Wimmera; VH CLIMATE potential. Impact as in 10(a) above.	P & C (2001)	**ML**
(c) low value EVC	EVC=Heathy woodland (V); CMA=Wimmera; Bioreg=Wimmera; VH CLIMATE potential. Impact as in 10(a) above.	P & C (2001)	**ML**
11. Impact on structure?	"Spiny burr-grass, which occupies open dry sandy situations and is a pioneer plant of disturbed sandy soils, also grows well under irrigation. Spiny burr-grass does not establish readily in pastures." Minor effect on the lower stratum only.	P & C (2001)	**L**
12. Effect on threatened flora?			

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QUESTION	COMMENTS	REFERENCE	RANKING
Fauna			
13. Effect on threatened fauna?			
14. Effect on non-threatened fauna?	"Spiny burr-grass, which occupies open dry sandy situations and is a pioneer plant of disturbed sandy soils, also grows well under irrigation." No fauna affected.	P & C (2001)	**L**
15. Benefits fauna?	No documented benefits.		**H**
16. Injurious to fauna?	"Spines can easily puncture the skin of animals." Potential to injure fauna.	P & C (2001)	**MH**
Pest Animal			
17. Food source to pests?	Not known as a food source to pests.		**L**
18. Provides harbor?	Not known to harbor pest animals.		**L**
Agriculture			
19. Impact yield?	"Spiny burr-grass does not establish readily in pastures." Although it does occur in summer crops, it is not documented to affect the yield.	P & C (2001)	**L**
20. Impact quality?	"The burrs become badly tangled in wool, lowering its value. Spines easily puncture the skin of animals thus affecting the value of the hides." It occurs as a contaminant in dried fruit and may infest lucerne hay. Additionally, *C. longispinus* does not appear to cover large areas. "Heavy grazing with sheep prevents seeding but it is not always practical to confine sheep to small patches of the weed in the large paddocks common to Australia."	P & C (2001)	**MH**
21. Affect land value?	Not known to affect land values.		**L**
22. Change land use?	Infestations can be controlled using a number of different techniques depending upon agricultural activities. Such techniques are: early cultivation; heavy grazing with sheep; establishing strong pasture growth particularly lucerne, which is very competitive against *C. longispinus.* Some temporary change may be necessary depending upon density of infestation and agricultural activity.	P & C (2001)	**M**
23. Increase harvest costs?	Burrs in wool, "make sheep difficult to handle, which results in penalty rates being paid to shearers." "Penalty rates are also paid to abattoirs staff handling burr-infested sheep."	P & C (2001)	**M**
24. Disease host/vector?	None evident.		**L**

[1] Barnard, T. (pers. comm.) Catchment Management Officer, Wodonga. Tel (02) 6043 7951. 01/05/03