

INVASIVE SPECIES ALERT!

MEDUSAHEAD

(*Taeniatherum caput-medusae*)

HAVE YOU SEEN THIS PLANT?

DESCRIPTION

- Native to the Mediterranean region
- Winter annual grass
- Growing plants are grey-green
- Plants are slender with one to several hollow, upright stems (15 to 60 cm tall) and few leaves
- Dense flower spikes develop long, twisting, wiry awns once seed production begins
- Maturing plants change from grey-green to purple to light-yellow as they senesce
- Fibrous roots
- Thrives in areas with dry, hot summers, sparse to no canopy, and frequented by fire
- Reproduces by seed. A single plant can produce 5,000-21,000 plants/m²
- Local dispersal mainly by water, animal fur and feces. Equipment and contaminated straw, hay or seed are the main pathways for long distance dispersal
- New introductions will likely occur in the Pend Oreille and be associated with movement by water, or mine material or equipment across the BC border from Washington.



REPORT INVASIVE SPECIES

www.reportaweedbc.ca

1-888-WEEDSBC



PRIMARY THREAT: Reduces rangeland grazing capacity and contaminates crops.

DID YOU KNOW?

- Medusahead germinates and matures later than more desirable annual grasses
- They are rich in silica, causing plant litter to break down more slowly than most other grass species
- Poor range management practices are known to accelerate medusahead rate of speed

LOOK-ALIKES

Immature medusahead may resemble foxtail barley (pictured below) and squirreltail



DISTRIBUTION IN BC

Not known to occur in BC but confirmed presence in Pend Oreille County, WA at the Boundary Dam and Tech Cominco.

CURRENT STATUS

Risk assessment completed.



For more information: www.for.gov.bc.ca/hra/Plants/prohibited.htm