

# What can we do?

## Take action in your neighborhood:

- Don't plant it!
- Cut plumes (seed heads) off before they seed. This may need to be done multiple times every summer/fall as new stalks emerge.
- If removal is desired, dig it up. Or spray with a broad spectrum contact herbicide in the fall, wait two weeks for the herbicide to move through the plant, then dig.
- Replace with a non-invasive ornamental grass. Options include, but are not limited to:

Giant dropseed  
(*Sporobolus wrightii*)

Great Basin Wildrye  
(*Leymus cinereus*)



These plants may be found at boutique or native plant nurseries

- Help spread the word about the potential negative impacts of Ravenna grass in Moab.

## Volunteer:

- Contact Moab Solutions at 435-259-0910 to help remove flower stalks in Mill Creek this summer. See <http://www.millcreekpartnership.net/> for more information



P.O. Box 1329  
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Moab Resident

# Ravenna (Pampas) Grass *Saccharum ravennae*

## An ornamental grass turned riparian invader

Ravenna grass (*Saccharum ravennae*) is a tall, dramatic bunchgrass that was introduced from Eurasia and threatens wetlands and riparian corridors in the desert southwest. This plant is highly invasive and competitive; it produces hundreds of thousands of seeds that are wind and water dispersed and germinate quickly and easily in a variety of soil and canopy conditions.



## Ravenna Identification

Ravenna grass is a very tall, erect perennial grass. It forms clumps 6-12ft tall and 4-6ft wide. It has relatively narrow (1in wide) gray-green leaf blades with a prominent single white stripe. The foliage turns bronze in the fall.



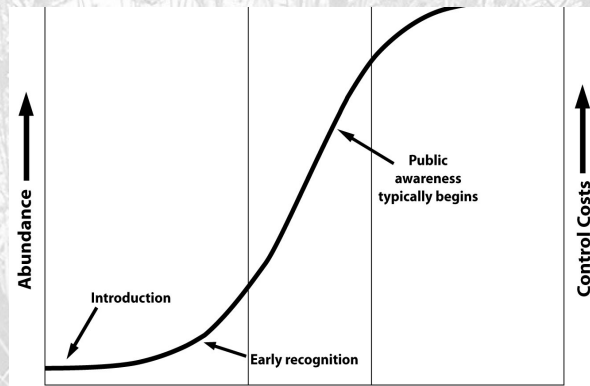
Plumes (up to 24in long) appear in late summer, far above the foliage. Plumes bloom purple-bronze, turn silver gray in the fall and persist into the winter.

## Ravenna Background

- Ornamental Grass in Horticultural trade since 1921, native to the Mediterranean
- Relatively new invader
- Can establish easily with little disturbance
- Can form an impenetrable monoculture, crowding out native plants or landscapes
- Can germinate under and grow out from under other vegetation
- Older stands can carry fire in areas that would not otherwise be fire-prone
- Can produce hundreds of thousands of seeds per plant; seeds are small and easily dispersed by wind
- Likely harbors rodents as do some other non-native large bunch grasses

## Ravenna in Moab

Until recently, Ravenna grass was not recognized as an invasive weed issue in the Moab area. But we are currently experiencing a rapid growth phase. While it may have completely invaded some areas, early recognition and control may save other areas from a similar fate.



Phases of Invasive Species Invasion and Control

Ravenna grass prefers sites that receive ample sunlight and have well drained, wet soil, making it a prime candidate to invade our irrigated landscapes, washes and rivers. It is capable of growing under the canopy of other riparian vegetation and displacing native species. Ravenna grass is highly competitive and will form monocultures in invaded areas.

There is a “sterile” form of pampas grass available in some nurseries that has been known to do well in Moab; this plant is considered to produce 99% sterile seeds. However, when a plant can produce many hundreds of thousands of seeds, even a small fraction of fertile seeds carry a large invasion potential.



Ravenna dominates some banks of Mill Creek



Landscape plantings in one yard may lead to unwanted invaders in a neighboring yard.

## What can we do?

Working together, we can stop the spread of this invader and help keep our riparian areas healthy. Turn to the back cover of this brochure to learn more.