

Semi-  
Aquatic  
Invasive  
Plant

# Rough Mannagrass

*Glyceria maxima*



## What is it and Why is it a Problem?

Rough Mannagrass is a perennial, semi-aquatic grass that forms dense monocultures in moist and nutrient-rich areas of open wetlands, particularly marshes, and on the edges of rivers and streams. It outcompetes native wetland grasses and other plants, reduces biodiversity, disrupts water flow, and dries up wetlands.

Since this plant produces cyanide, it is advised to keep pets and livestock away from infested areas.



## What Does it Look Like?

- Grows over 1.5 m tall, even up to 2.5 m tall
- Leaves are arranged alternate and 30 - 60 cm long
- Stem sheaths (bottom of leaf that wraps around the stem) are rough and reddish-purple in colour especially during the spring
- Stems are rigid, fleshy and flattened or oval shaped in cross-section view
- Flower/seed heads with seeds are upright
- Looks similar to native species of manna grass (*Glyceria* spp.), but these have smooth stems, bent flower/seed heads and typically do not grow as tall as the invasive species (less than 1.5 m tall)



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# How Can it be Managed?

## Prevention

- Report sightings of any invasive species online through [EDDMaps Ontario](#), a web-based mapping system which also has an app, or through the [Invasive Species in Ontario](#) project on [iNaturalist.org](#).
- Stay on the trail and keep pets on a leash to avoid unintentionally spreading the root fragments and seeds.

## Removal

Hand pulling is recommended for small stands and may possibly have to be done a couple times a year to remove re-sprouts. Make sure you remove all rhizomes and root masses when hand pulling or excavating. Mowing a couple times a year, especially in the late fall, can reduce carbohydrate stores and therefore the density of the stand in the following spring, but is usually not effective as a stand-alone method in eradicating the plant. An option for very dense stands is tarping. The infested area can be tarped with a dark-coloured tarp to reduce sunlight reaching the plant, and to “cook” the roots. This should be done after the stems have been cut back and left on for two seasons. It is most effective in areas that typically receive a lot of sunlight.

One last option for very persistent infestations is herbicide application, but just make sure you check the [Ontario Government's Allowable List of Pesticides](#) and follow the Ontario Pesticides Act and Ontario Regulation 63/09 and local by-laws. Keep in mind that herbicides are not recommended for use in wetland and lake areas due to difficulties that arise in protecting non-target species in aquatic ecosystems. Ensure you follow [OMNRF's rules](#) regarding removing invasive species.

## Disposal

Dispose of Rough Mannagrass by collecting the plant pieces in a black sealed bag and drying them out for a week. After this, the plant pieces can be burned (if your municipality allows) or brought to a landfill.



## References

[Great Lakes Nonindigenous Species Information System](#), produced by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[Methods to Control Invasive Species](#), produced by Credit Valley Conservation

[Ontario Invading Species Awareness Program](#), developed by the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF), and the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters (OFAH).