

# Itchgrass (*Rottboellia cochinchinensis*)

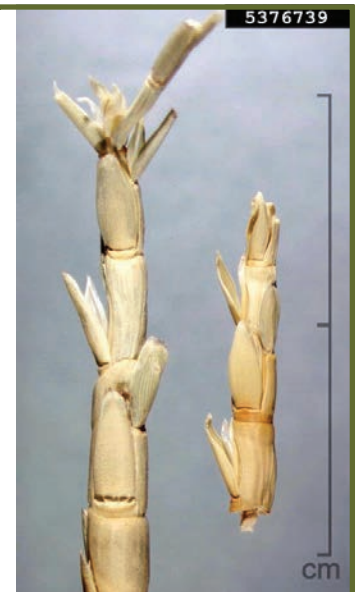


Itchgrass is an annual grass that is native to tropical Southeast Asia, and is a federal noxious weed in the US. Itchgrass is commonly 3 to 6 feet tall, but can grow 10 feet high if left unchecked. **Itchgrass seeds spread via road construction equipment, farm machinery, birds, and wind**, and has been found in AL, AR, FL, GA, IN, LA, MS, NC, TX, and now SC. This annual grassy weed is similar in appearance to Johnsongrass and fall panicum. However, itchgrass can be identified by pale green color, **prop roots, cylindrical spike inflorescences and seed**, and long, sharp siliceous hairs on the leaf sheaths and much of the plant. The **sharp hairs can penetrate skin causing irritation**, hence the common name.

The leaf sheaths, especially at the collar or ligule, have short, stiff hairs that irritate the skin.



Leaf blades, about 1 in. wide with a distinct white midrib, taper to a point and have short hairs on the leaf surface.



The florets are embedded into cylindrical spikes that are about 4 in. long.

If you suspect itchgrass, contact Clemson University Dept. of Plant Industry at (864) 646-2140 or [invasives@clemson.edu](mailto:invasives@clemson.edu)



Itchgrass has noticeable **prop roots** at the base of the grass that anchor the plant to the soil.

Special thanks to Virginia Extension, IPAMS and Bugwood for photos and information.