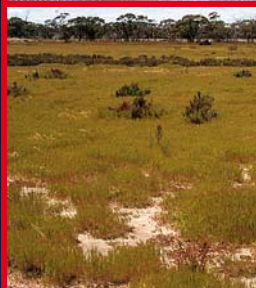


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SALTdeck Series

SEA BARLEY GRASS

Hordeum marinum

G15
GRASS



SEA BARLEY GRASS

Hordeum marinum



Alternative names: *Critesion marinum*, Squirrel Tail Grass, Wall Barley Grass.

Family: Poaceae.

Description: Tufted, erect or abruptly bent (kneed) annual grass to about 50 cm tall with tapered, pointed, velvety-hairy leaves. Seedhead compact dense, neat with numerous stiff awns. Spikelets in threes, 4–7 mm long excluding the awns (see photo).

Key features: Distinguished from the usually larger Barley Grass *Hordeum leporinum* by absence of hairs on the spikelets (see photo) and absence of auricles (ear-shaped lobes) at the leaf blade/sheath junction. Sea Barley Grass spikelets are generally more persistent in the seedhead than Barley Grass—walk through the two species when they are mature, with socks exposed and note the difference!

Value: Useful as a pioneer species in salt-affected land. An annual grass that germinates with the first significant autumn rain and provides early pick of high nutritive value in winter—although it may respond to rain and germinate at any time. Nutritive value declines significantly to less than a maintenance feed over summer and is generally not eaten by stock at this time.

Salinity and waterlogging tolerance: Has low to moderate waterlogging tolerance and high salinity tolerance as this species naturally grows in tidal saltmarsh.

Notes: Native of southern and western Europe. Like Barley Grass, *Hordeum leporinum*, has sharp spikelets and awns that cause problems penetrating eye sockets and skin of sheep.

References: *Flora of NSW*, Harden (ed), Vol. 4, 1993. *Flora of Victoria*, Walsh and Entwisle (eds), Vol. 2, 1994. *Plants of Western NSW*, Cunningham et al., 1981.

