Take note!

Through their ability to aggressively promote fire, these two African grasses are poised to destroy the Sonoran Desert as we know it:

buffelgrass (Pennisetum ciliare)

fountain grass (Pennisetum setaceum)

For more information:

- Call the Desert Lab at (520)629-9455 x104 for a free neighborhood demonstration, available through May 2006
- Or, contact Pima County Natural Resources, Parks and Recreation (520)877-6122

These efforts are supported by:

The University of Arizona Desert Laboratory

USGS science for a changing world

Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum

The Arizona Native Plant Society

Sonoran Arthropod Studies Institute

City of Tucson

Arizona Cooperative Extension

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Forest Service U.S. Department of Agriculture

Tucson Electric Power — A UniSource Energy Company

Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan

The Seal of Pima County Arizona

Pima County Natural Resources Parks & Recreation

Pima County Flood Control District

Buffelgrass and Fountain grass are BRINGING FIRE *to the Sonoran Desert*

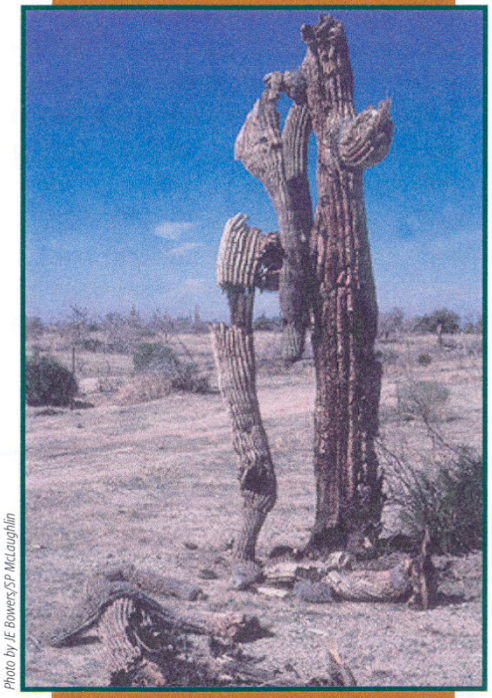
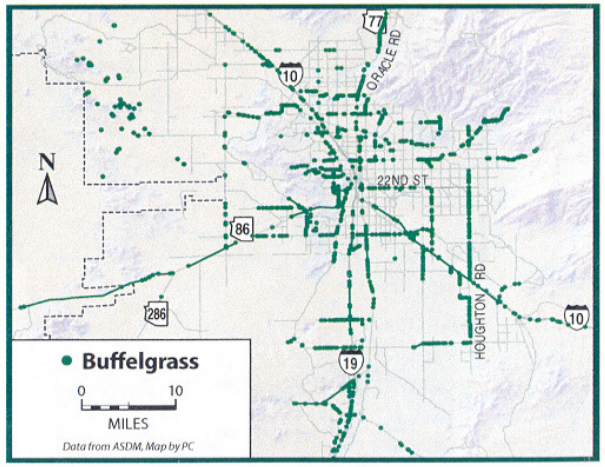


Photo by JE Bowers/SP McLaughlin

The First Line of Defense Begins in Your Neighborhood!

Invaders

Two introduced African grasses, buffelgrass and fountain grass, are invading your neighborhood, increasing fire danger around homes and along roadsides. Everyday vehicular traffic spreads their seed into and out of your neighborhood, throughout the city and into natural desert areas. Our desert vegetation evolved without fire, so undeterred spread of these grasses and associated fires will compromise our unique Tucson landscape. Can you imagine Tucson with frequent grass fires and fast-dwindling numbers of saguaros and paloverdes? To protect your own neighborhood and the desert that we live in, we urge you to act now! Eradication of these grasses won't be easy. Buffelgrass is being planted in Sonora and Texas for cattle forage and fountain grass is widely planted as an ornamental grass.



Buffelgrass distribution on roadways in the Tucson metro area.

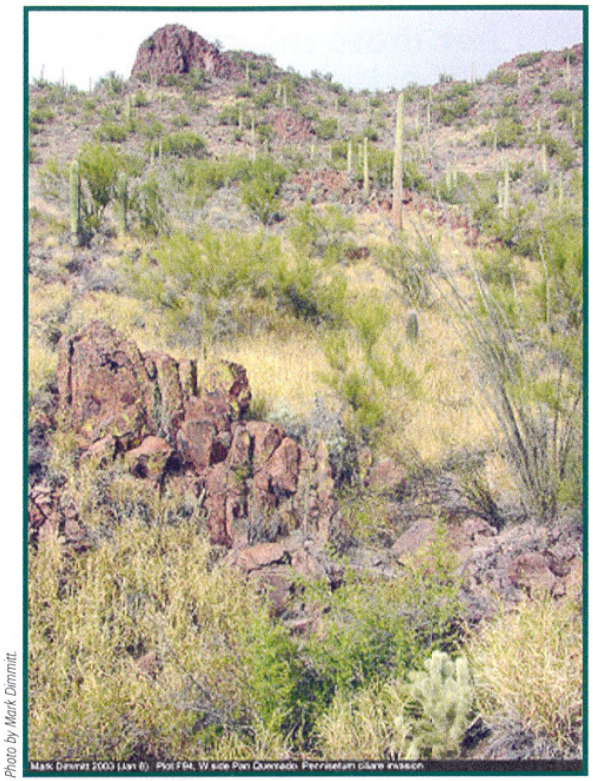


Photo by Mark Dimmitt

Buffelgrass infestation in the Pan Quemado Mountains, Ironwood Forest National Monument. Note the accumulation of abundant fuel around the paloverdes and saguaros.

How can I get rid of buffelgrass or fountain grass in my neighborhood?

- Pull them out! Make sure to get the whole plant or they'll come back.
- Herbicides such as Roundup can be very effective when used properly.
- Wait a few months and repeat your chosen method until no more seedlings are observed.

What are the consequences of doing nothing?

- *Profound alteration or disappearance of parts of the Sonoran Desert:*
  - Loss of biodiversity, especially "postcard" species like saguaros and paloverdes, as well as the wildlife that depend on them.
  - Increased fires, not only in natural areas but also in urban and suburban areas.

What can we do about buffelgrass and fountain grass?

- Be a good neighbor–remove them from your yard, medians and roadsides before they can spread!
- Raise awareness–talk to your friends, neighbors, and coworkers about this threat!
- Encourage state and local governments to eradicate these species on public lands, roadsides, and right-of-ways.

Sonoran Desert Weedwackers working along Kinney Road

Photo by Marilyn Hanson