

# DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN **NEEDLE GRASSES** AND **NATIVE GRASSES**

## **Chilean Needle Grass** *(Nassella neesiana)* (WEED)



Photo: Charles Grech

At maturity, if plant is not mown, seed heads usually droop to one side. Seeds have a tiny collar (corona) where the long tail (awn) comes out of the seed.

## **Fine-head Spear Grass** *(Austrostipa oligostachya)* (NATIVE)



Photo: Seed Conservation Centre Botanic Gdns SA

Can look similar to Chilean Needle Grass. The best way to tell them apart is that Spear Grass doesn't have a collar on its seed, and the seed is hairier. (See drawings of seeds on reverse side.)

## **Rough Spear Grass** *(Austrostipa scabra)* (NATIVE)

Sometimes confused with Needle Grasses. Although it may look a bit purplish, it is much finer than Chilean Needle Grass and its leaves are rolled, not flat. Heads are normally fairly upright.



Photo: Sam Panter

## **Wallaby Grasses** *(Rytidosperma spp.)* (NATIVES)

Often found near Needle Grasses.



Photo: Seed Conservation Centre Botanic Gdns SA  
**Striped Wallaby Grass**

Awns on Wallaby Grass seeds are much finer and shorter than awns on Needle Grasses – see photos below.



Photo: F. Cincotta

**Copper-awned Wallaby Grass has flat leaves like Chilean Needle Grass but a fluffy seed head.**



Photo: Ern Perkins

**Seed of Striped Wallaby Grass magnified 3 times. It has 3 awns. Needle Grasses have one awn.**

## **Texas Needle Grass** *(Nassella leucotricha)* (WEED)



Photo: Ern Perkins

R&F Richardson

May look purplish, like Chilean Needle Grass, but is usually more upright.

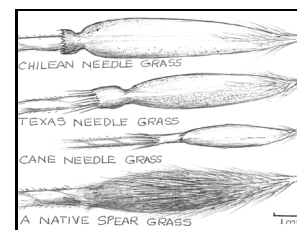
## **Cane Needle Grass** *(Nassella hyalina)* (WEED)



Photo: David McLaren

Photo: Euan Moore

May look similar to Texas Needle Grass, but is finer and wispier and seeds and awns are smaller, and seeds often look yellowish at maturity.



Drawing: Margaret Panter

**Seeds of Chilean Needle Grass, Texas Needle Grass, Cane Needle Grass and a native Spear Grass magnified 5x**

## **Espartillo** *(Amelichloa caudata)* (WEED)



Photo: Bernard Slattery

Seed has an awn, but no corona. When mowed, tufts often feel sharp and spiky when a hand is placed on them.



Photo: Rob & Fiona Richardson

## **Large Tussock Grass** *(Poa labillardieri)* (NATIVE)



Photo: Ian Higgins

Leaves of the local form are folded, whereas Espartillo has rolled leaves that are much stiffer than those of Large Tussock Grass.