



## Management Techniques

1. (All year) Hand Pulling. Pull small plants out by hand, making sure to get the entire root system. All plant material pulled must be bagged and removed from the area. Best if done before plant has flowered, to prevent seed spread. After this is done, the area should be monitored for resprouts for several seasons. Large infestations can be spot treated using technique 2, small amounts can be pulled and bagged.
2. (Mid Spring– Early Summer) Herbicides. In late winter or early spring, burn or cut the plant to the ground and remove all plant matter to ensure vigorous growth. When the new plants reach 1 foot tall, spray them with glyphosate. Spot treat any regrowth in late summer or early fall when it reaches 1 foot tall again. This technique may need to be repeated. This works best if followed by technique 1 on resprouts.
3. (Summer) Mowing. Frequently (at least twice per season; preferably monthly) mow the plant as close to the ground as possible. This technique should be effective after two seasons of mowing. Do not mow the plant in the winter, as this encourages growth in the spring.
4. (Late Summer– Fall) Cut and bag the plumes. This prevents the spread of seed.

\*\*Important Note: Glyphosate is non-selective, avoid contacting non-target plants

For More Information Visit:

<http://www.HawkeyeCWMA.org>

## ALWAYS READ AND FOLLOW PESTICIDE LABELS.

Proper training for prescribed fires is highly recommended.

Basic training can be found online at <http://training.nwcg.gov/courses/s130.html> and <http://training.nwcg.gov/courses/s190.html>

### Related Websites:

<http://www.iowadnr.com/forestry/invasive.html>  
<http://plants.usda.gov>  
[www.invasivespecies.gov](http://www.invasivespecies.gov)  
[www.nps.gov/plants/alien](http://www.nps.gov/plants/alien)

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The **Hawkeye Cooperative Weed Management Area (HCWMA)** is a collective group of county, state, and federal agencies, nonprofit organizations and community associations who have come together to **combat the invasive species problem in Eastern Iowa.** The HCWMA serves Benton, Cedar, Iowa, Johnson, Jones, Linn, and Louisa Counties and is open to all interested parties. The Term CWMA, or Cooperative Weed Management Area, refers to a local organization that integrates invasive species

management resources across jurisdictional boundaries in order to benefit entire regions.

All Hawkeye CWMA members (agencies, organizations, and individuals) are equal opportunity providers and employers.



# Amur Silvergrass

## *Miscanthus sacchariflorus*



A SERIOUS THREAT  
To  
Iowa's Prairie/Grassland

## What is Amur Silvergrass?

- Also known as pampasgrass, plumegrass, or silver bannergrass
- Introduced from eastern Asia in late 1800s
- Very popular as an ornamental grass
- Grows up to 8 feet tall

## What is the threat to Iowa?

- Forms dense monospecific stands, particularly in wet or disturbed areas
- Crowds out native vegetation, reducing food availability for wildlife
- Can easily overtake native prairie
- No susceptibility to fire control
- Has no natural growth controls

## Which species do I have?

*Miscanthus sinensis* is a closely related species which can be difficult to differentiate from Amur Silvergrass (*Miscanthus sacchariflorus*). Some of the primary differences are:

- Rhizomes. *M. sacchariflorus* has long, invasive rhizomes while *M. sinensis* has weak or no rhizomes.
- Inflorescence. Both species produce hairs from spikelets. In *M. sacchariflorus* they are 2-4 times the length of the spikelet, white, and become fluffy with age. *M. sinensis* has hairs which are equal in length or shorter than the spikelet. They are purple or reddish in color and eventually turn beige.
- Awns. Only *M. sinensis* grows an awn (a stiff bristle) from its spikelets.

## What does Amur Silvergrass Look Like?

**Identifying traits:** A tall showy grass growing up to 8 feet tall with an inflorescence that is commonly soft, white, and feathery. Leaves are up to 3 feet long, slender, and have a silver-white midvein.

### Stems:

Up to 8 feet in height, typically pale yellow to green to reddish in color, fading to pale brown in the fall. Similar in structure to bamboo, it is covered in hair-like structures at the nodes.



### Leaves:

The leaves sprout from nodes and are long, blade-like, and abundant, 1 inch wide by 3 feet long. Distinguishable by a silver-white midvein and an arched shape. Color changes to orange or pink in the fall.



### Rhizomes:



Reproduces aggressively by spreading rhizomes through the ground which root and produce new plants. Given time these rhizomes will create dense mats belowground.

### Inflorescence:

Light and feathery in appearance, white flowers form in August and fall apart by December but may last throughout winter. Flowers are plume-like in the fall.



### Seeds:

Covered in long white hairs, seeds are small, light and dispersed by the wind.



## Native Alternatives:

### Indiangrass (*Sorghastrum nutans*):

This native perennial grass grows up to 5 feet tall. It grows best in dry soils with full sun, but it can tolerate poor soils. It blooms in late summer with light brown stamens. The abundant seeds attract birds in the fall and winter and its deep roots help prevent soil erosion.



### Big Bluestem (*Andropogon gerardi*):

A major prairie species that grows 3-9 feet tall. Its seeds and stalks provide food for wildlife, while its susceptibility to fire maintains prairie biodiversity. An extensive root system helps to prevent the establishment of invasions and improve soil health.



## Why shouldn't I plant Silvergrass in my yard?

Amur Silvergrass may look attractive on your front lawn but its excessive growth and tendency to escape to roadsides make it a problem for local towns and counties, and it can prove difficult to control. In addition it will quickly spread through your yard, requiring frequent use of laborious management practices such as root removal.

## What can I plant instead?

Several beautiful native grasses exist that make excellent alternatives:

- Switchgrass
- Canada Wild Rye
- Blue Oatgrass
- Prairie Dropseed
- Canadian Reedgrass
- Side-oats Grama

These natives are good for the soil, require little maintenance, support the local ecosystem and can attract birds and other wildlife to your yard.



Switchgrass (*Panicum virgatum*)