COMMON NAME: Red-leg Grass **SCIENTIFIC NAME:** *Bothriochloa macra*

CATEGORY: C4 perennial (summer active)

IDENTIFICATION TIPS

- Tufted, warm season perennial grass to 1m tall
- Leaves generally grow quite flat to the ground, especially when grazed
- Leaves and stems often reddish or purplish, especially after frost. Nodes (leaf joints) are red and hairless
- Seedhead consists of 2-4 erect branches (3-8cm long) pressed close together. Seeds are awned
- Flowers in summer and autumn
- Commonly found on roadsides

CLIMATIC & SOIL REQUIREMENTS

- Wide tolerance of soil types and fertility types, except for very acid soils (pHCa < 4.2)
- Highly drought tolerant, but frost sensitive

GRAZING & NUTRITIONAL VALUE

- Moderate grazing value, but low when frosted
- Digestibility ranges from 48-69 %
- Crude protein 4-15 %

MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

- Tolerates disturbance; one of the first native plants to return to drought affected sown pastures
- A valuable coloniser of degraded areas and useful for stabilising waterways
- Can produce a large amount of material, the majority of which is stem. However, it ***can provide quality feed after summer rain*** and is best utilised at this time
- Responsive to fertiliser and increased grazing pressure, but grows well in unfertilised areas
- Best kept green and leafy as it has a high stem to leaf ratio when flowering and stock tend to avoid it once it goes to seed; rotational grazing helps maintain larger plants
- Maintain heavier grazing from late winter to mid spring to avoid clover and annual grass dominance in spring or red grass populations can thin out dramatically
- To increase density, allow to seed in summer and rest pastures in late summer to aid seed germination if conditions are suitable
- Seed can be sown by spreading seed-bearing hay or broadcasting and harrowing in spring or early autumn

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Ko-warra NATIVE GRASSES

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