

Themeda triandra – Kangaroo Grass

One of our native grasses, this was once the dominant grass over much of Australia but is now much reduced in pastoral areas. In the Sydney region it can grow almost anywhere except in closed forest.

It flowers in late Spring and early Summer.

There is light purplish-green on the fine leaves which grow in tufts. Bristly clusters of yellowish orange spikelets (flowers) grow at intervals on the stem up to 1m long.

Propagation is straightforward, although on occasion seed can be subject to a dormant period of several months in the colder months and may take time to germinate

This deep-rooted grass has smooth, hairless, upright stems. The leaves are mostly at the base of the plant, are yellow or green in color, and are 15-50cm long and 5mm wide. The leaves become red/brown as they age. The flowerheads contain loose reddish seed heads with leafy spikelets (these are the structures that contain the flowers). These unusual spikes are the most distinctive part of the plant. The flowers also change color as they mature, from a green/reddish brown to a reddish pink.

This is a perennial plant, which matures through the summer and is mainly dormant throughout the cooler months. It uses seeds for propagation.

This hardy species occurs in areas of low rainfall and altitude, on woodlands and grasslands. May be found on all types of soil except deep sands. Usually located in small localized patches. It is also common near roads and railways.

This grass is very tolerant to fire and drought.

Propagation

Any seed raising mix you find successful can be used. I put a good layer of propagating sand on top. Sow the seeds thinly as they come - some have parts of the floret attached. Leave any awns on.