



**Vila do Conde**  
Câmara Municipal

# Invasive plants in Regional Protected Landscape of the Coast of Vila do Conde and Ornithological Reserve of Mindelo



NOVEMBER, 27

## Invasive Plants - What they are

Some species have been transported from their natural habitat and are being called exotic (from Greek *exotikós*, “from outside”). When these species develop very quickly and become beyond the control of Man, overcoming biotic and abiotic barriers while maintaining stable populations, are called **invasive**.

Invasive species can be compared to a form of pollution that, unlike the others, does not stop when it eliminates the emission source.

## Invasive Plants – Impacts

They are responsible for many negative impacts, often of difficult and expensive resolution and, in some cases, irreversible. Among others the following impacts are noted:

- 1) high economic impact in terms of production, in particular when they are species that invade agricultural, forestry or fisheries areas, either in the application of control measures and restoration of invaded systems;
- 2) impacts on public health – allergies, diseases or act as pest vectors;
- 3) decrease in the availability of water in aquifers, especial for species whit a intensive use of water;
- 4) impacts on the ecosystems’ balance, achieved over thousands of years of evolution, wich can change biogeochemical cycles (carbon and nitrogen cycle), change the fire regimes and food chains, and replacing native species, at times completely.

Invasive species are one of the greatest threats to the planet’s economic and environmental well-being.

# Invasive plants fact sheets

## Pampas grass

**Scientific name:** *Cortaderia selloana* (Schult. & Schult.f.) Asch. & Graebn.

**Common names:** pampas grass, silver pampas grass

**Status in Portugal:** invasive species



Fonte: Rui Brito, Dr.

**Native distribution area:** tropical part of South America (Chile and Argentina).

**Impacts:** A female plant may produce up to one million seeds which are dispersed very efficiently by the wind, originating invasion foci in distant locations.

They can cause allergies; the razor sharp leaves may injure people, create barriers to fauna circulation and uses available resources for other species. Its control methodologies are quite expensive.



## Sydney golden wattle

**Scientific name:** *Acacia longifolia* (Andrews) Willd.

**Common names:** Sydney golden wattle, golden wattle.

**Status in Portugal:** *invasive species*



Fonte: Rui Brito, Dr.

**Native distribution área:** Southeast Australia

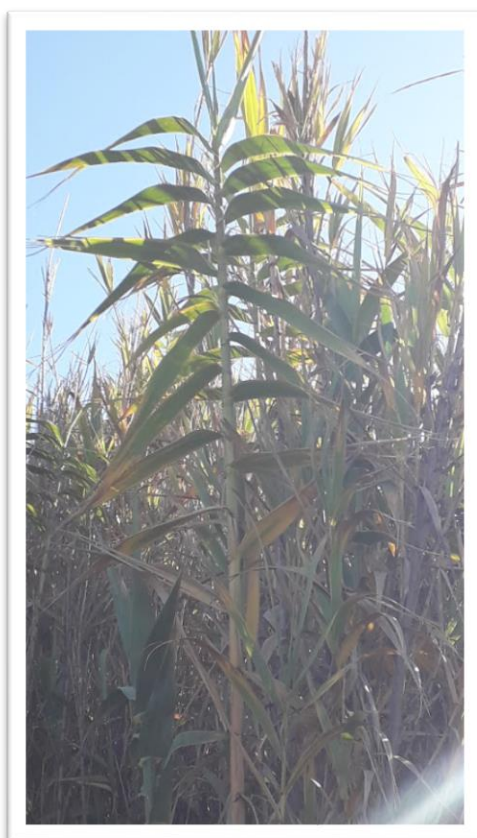
**Impacts:** It forms very dense populations inhibiting the development of native vegetation and diminishing the flow of watercourses. It produces a lot of nitrogen-rich litter, which promotes change in microbiology and soil composition (carbon and nutrients, mainly nitrogen); it requires expensive control methods.

## Giant reed

**Scientific name:** *Arundo donax* L.

**Common names:** giant reed, giant cane

**Status in Portugal:** invasive species



Fonte: Rui Brito, Dr.

**Native distribution area:** It is presumed to be native to eastern Europe, temperate and tropical Asia

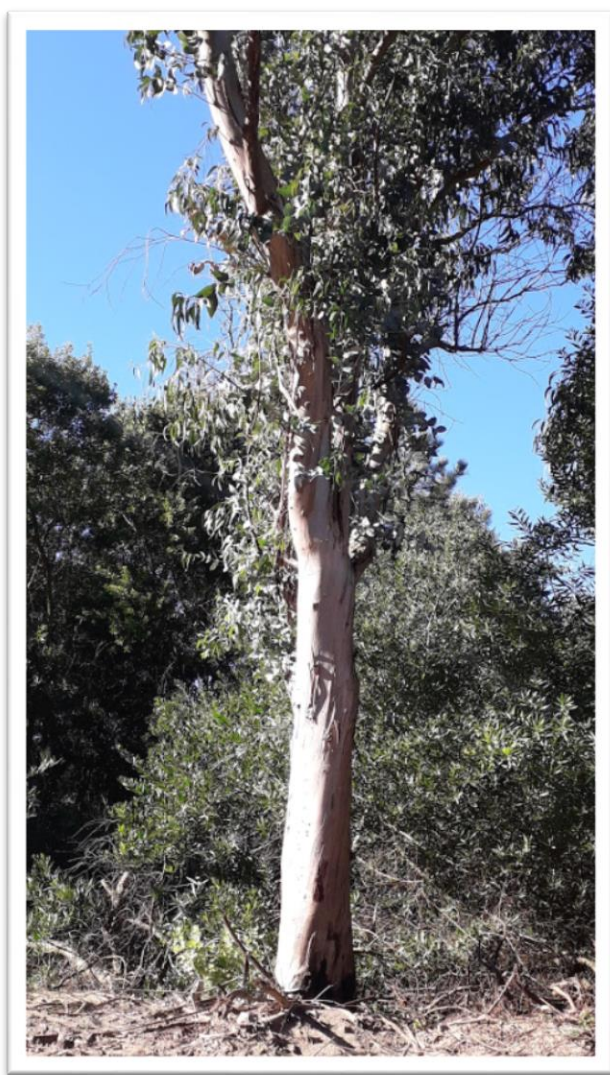
**Impacts:** It reproduces with very high growth rates. The rhizome fragments are transported along watercourses and originate new, very distant, invasion foci when retained in the banks. It clones itself until it occupies extensive areas, interfering with the water flow and hampering the development of native vegetation, barring the associated fauna. It accentuates the probability of fire occurrence and damages caused by it, because it's very flammable, even when green. It has high costs in the application of control methodologies

## Blue gum

**Scientific name:** Eucalyptus globulus Labill.

**Common names:** blue gum, Tasmanian blue gum, common eucalyptus

**Status in Portugal:** invasive species



Fonte: Rui Brito, Dr.

**Native distribution área:** Southeast Australia and Tasmania

**Impacts:** Form continuous mats, inhibiting the development of other species. It has allelopathic effects, inhibiting the development of other species. It may demand expensive control methods.

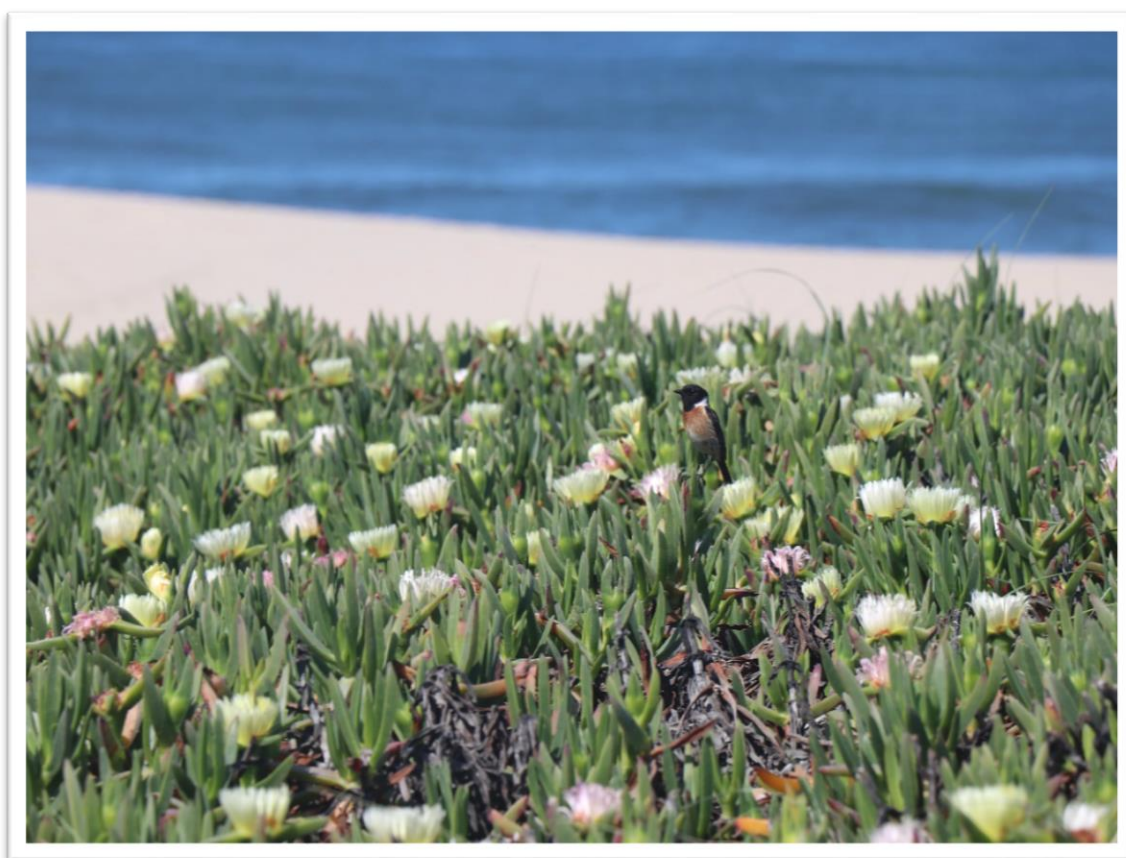


## Ice plant

**Scientific name:** *Carpobrotus edulis* (L.) N. E. Br.

Common names: ice plant, iceplant, highway iceplant, Hottentot fig, sea fig

**Status in Portugal:** invasive species



Fonte: Rui Brito, Dr.

**Native distribution área:** *South Africa (Cape Region)*

**Impacts:** It forms impenetrable mats that cover extensive areas, hampering the development of native vegetation. It promotes soil acidification, a process that favours its own growth. It has high costs in applying control methodologies.