

Media Release

Chiefs of Staff, News Directors

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New book makes getting to know your grass even easier

Researchers from the University of Tasmania have this week published a new go-to guide for identifying grasses in Tasmania.

Tasmania has more than 250 species of native and introduced grasses and the book features the most common grasses found in lowland Tasmania.

Associate Professor Peter Lane, one of only a few experts on grass identification in Tasmania, is the lead author of the book titled *Common Grasses of Tasmania*.

“The information is aimed at a wide audience from those involved in agriculture to students and others who work in the areas of forestry, conservation, and land and natural resource management,” Associate Professor Lane said.

“It describes each grass so that even with little or no botanical knowledge, you can easily identify many by matching specimens to the photographs and detailed lifelike drawings.”

“Grasses are an extremely important economic, environmental and social component of the Tasmanian landscape. They support agricultural production by providing the bulk of feed for the grazing industries in the State, in addition to adding carbon to the soil profile.”

“Many grasses are considered to be weeds as they compete with other more preferred plants in agricultural and conservation areas. Being able to identify pasture grasses is important in order to manage for environmental and production outcomes.”

The book is a welcome and expanded revision of *Common Grasses: An Agriculturalists’ Guide*.

Honorary Research Fellow and co-author, Dr Kerry Bridle, said the motivation to revise the book came about whilst monitoring ground cover and carbon stores in pastures as part of an Australian Government Carbon Farming Initiative project.

“We found that many people really didn’t know which grasses they were dealing with, whether they were useful perennial species or volunteer ‘weedy’ annual grasses,” Dr Bridle said.

“We hope this guide will help readers to identify grass species and make appropriate land management decisions for production and environmental outcomes.”

The complete book is available to download from <http://www.utas.edu.au/tia>

The book was produced with funding from the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Action on the Ground program and Cradle Coast NRM, NRM North and NRM South.

Dr Bridle will give a talk on grass identification at the Port Arthur Lavender Farm as part of the Dunalley and Tasman Landcare's 'Dirty Weekend', being held from 5 - 7pm on Friday 29 May.

Information released by:

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