Sorghum Almum (Columbus Grass) Fact Sheet

Distinguishing Features:

1. **Flowers**: Loose, branching clusters growing 6-24 inches long with lax, spreading branches. Panicles droop as seeds grow larger.
2. **Seeds**: Reddish-brown to black, oval, 0.25-0.4 inches long.
3. **Leaves**: Leaves are 2.5-4 cm. wide and waxy. Stems are 1 inch thick and can reach up to 14 feet tall.
4. **Flowering Time**: June to September.
5. **Life cycle**: Perennial that spreads via thick short rhizomes.

Impacts:

- Native to South America, Sorghum Almum is a hybrid between Johnsongrass and Grain sorghum.
- Sorghum Almum was intentionally grown as a forage crop in Australia, but escaped cultivation and now can be found infesting ditches, canals, fields, pastures, and roadsides.
- Quickly establishes in disturbed soils, sending out underground runners that sprout many stems and quickly form dense stands.

Control:

- Small infestations can by removed manually by digging up individual plants. Care must be made to remove as much of the plant as possible, as stems will regenerate from rhizomes left in the ground. Repeated tilling can also be effective.
- Larger infestations require a combination of control methods. Cultivate in the summer before seeds heads form, then apply herbicide on regrowth.
- In pastures, spot spraying and maintaining a strong and competitive pasture will help prevent infestation.
- Chemical control can be effective against Sorghum Almum when plants are actively growing. Herbicide treatment is particularly successful on seedlings and young plants before they flower.

*Please visit our website for references sourcing this information.*