



# **Torpedograss**

(*Panicum roeens* L.)

By Steve Batten

Torpedograss can be found in sandy soils throughout the southeastern United States along the Gulf Coast. It spreads primarily by an extensive rhizome network although it is a vigorous seed producer. The large sharp pointed elongated rhizomes allows the torpedograss to form a turf, so it can quickly invade bermudagrass fairways and collars on greens.

The seeds are produced on open panicles 7 to 12 cm long with the branches stiffly ascending typical of most *Panicums*. The sheaths have overlapping loose hairy margins and the leaf blades are flat or folded and can be hairy or smooth.

Its preference for wet soils makes torpedograss a common sight on lake banks and drainageways of most Florida golf courses. The herbicides that control torpedograss will also control bermudagrass. Non-selective herbicides such as glyphosate (Round up) is the best control. On bermudagrass turf, a few superintendents have even used paint brushes to selectively place glyphosate for torpedograss control. Excavation is often tried, but care has to be taken to completely remove all of the rhizomes. More likely than not excavation will only cultivate a denser torpedograss population.

Fisherman will find torpedograss attractive on lake banks, because it is a favorite hiding place for large mouth bass.

(Illustration from **TURF MANAGEMENT FOR GOLF COURSES**, Fall 1982, by James Beard, published by Burgess Publishing Co., Minneapolis, Minn., illustrated by Steve Batten) ■