

COMMON REED

Phragmites australis
Poaceae, the grass family
Category: Control

Leslie J. Mehrhoff, University of Connecticut, Bugwood.org

FACTSHEET INFORMATION

Summary of Invasiveness

- Common reed, otherwise known in North America as phragmites, can form dense stands that crowd and shade-out native vegetation and wildlife in wetland areas.
- The plant is capable of altering habitat areas by changing the hydrology and topography of the invaded system, and has also been known to increase fire frequency and mosquito breeding habitat.

Description

- Perennial, warm-season grass.
- Grows up to 15 ft. tall.
- Develops into large infestations in freshwater alkaline and brackish waters, as well as acidic wetlands.
- Roots are fibrous with rhizomes.
- Leaves are flat, hairless and can reach up to 2 inches in length.
- Flowers are made up of tawny-colored spikelets with tufts of silky hairs.
- Seeds have tufts of hair which aids in disbursement.

Introduction and Movement

- Invasive phragmites is native to Europe and was potentially introduced as a contaminate in soil used as ballast in the 1800's.
- Seeds can travel long distances by wind and can also be carried on clothing, animals, hunting/fishing equipment and on motorized vehicles.

Prevention Strategy

- To prevent accidental introductions, learn how to identify phragmites in the field and report any sightings.
- When recreating, make sure to clean off any vegetative materials when leaving each area & before entering another.
- Always Remember To:

KNOCK IT OFF AND
CLEAN • DRAIN • DRY

Sources

- Alberta Invasive Species Council: <https://abnvasives.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/FS-Phragmites.pdf>.
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Steve Dewey, Utah State University, Bugwood.org



Rebekah D. Wallace, University of Georgia, Bugwood.org



Kahla Montrose, ISDA

COMMON REED DISTRIBUTION MAP



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