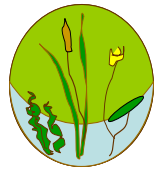




FRIGHTENING FACTS

South Carolina and North Carolina Exotic Plant Pest Councils



SCIENTIFIC NAME: *PHRAGMITES AUSTRALIS* VAR. *AUSTRALIS*
COMMON NAME: COMMON REED
KNOWN TO OCCUR IN SC AND NC

WHAT IS COMMON REED?

Plant Type: large perennial rhizomatous grass, or reed

Form/Size: Can grow over 15 feet tall in dense stands with thick, cane-like stem stalks; forms dense stands including previous years stalks; dead stalks retain leaf sheath.

Leaves: Broad, pointed, flat, glabrous, dark green, up to 6-23.6 inches long, 0.4-2.4 inches wide.

Flowers: Fluffy, dense grey, golden or purple plumes 6-15 inches long, blooms July-October.

Fruit: Small seed with white pappus; each plant produces thousands annually.

Means of Spread: Vegetative growth through rhizomes; seeds have low viability. Root and stem fragments spread by water and equipment and sprout readily. Can grow 10 foot long rhizomes in 1 growing season.

Family: Poaceae

Similar Native Species: Native *Phragmites* (*Phragmites australis* var. *americanus*), only grows to 8 ft. tall, leaves are yellow-green, flower head more sparse, dead stalks weak and do not retain leaf sheaths.



WHERE DID COMMON REED COME FROM?

Origin: Eurasia and Africa

Date of Introduction: late 18th or early 19th century.

Reason: Accidentally in ballast material.

WHERE AM I LIKELY TO FIND COMMON REED?

Habitat Type: Tidal and non-tidal fresh and brackish marshes, sometimes in altered, degraded, or polluted salt marshes; river edges, lake and pond shores.

Distribution in SC: outer Coastal Plain

Distribution in NC: outer Coastal Plain

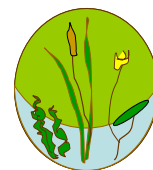


Early Detection & Rapid Response (EDRR) Species



FRIGHTENING FACTS

South Carolina and North Carolina Exotic Plant Pest Councils



WHY IS COMMON REED A PROBLEM?

Environment: -Completely displaces native wetland plants reducing diversity and altering wildlife habitat structure; provides little food value for wildlife.

-Alters wetland hydrology; blocks sunlight from reaching aquatic community.

-High flammability can alter fire ecology of natural communities by increasing the frequency and intensity.

Economy: -Direct economic damage has not been assessed or reported; however control efforts are difficult and expensive.



WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I FIND GIANT REED?

Report: take a photo, report the observation to EDDMapS: <http://www.se-eppc.org/> (location, size of infestation, etc.). *In SC:* call the Clemson University Plant Problem Clinic (864-656-2677) for guidance. Send digital photo to John Nelson at the USC Herbarium: plantman@herbarium.org for verification.

Control: Restore the flow of salt water (to favor native salt marsh grasses over time). In brackish or freshwater areas manual or chemical control is needed. Cut stems at the end of July; cover cut stems with black plastic; physically prevent spread with a polypropylene barrier; burn after flowering followed by herbicide (large stands will burn very hot); burn after flowering followed by flooding; use glyphosate herbicide in late summer when in full bloom, cut/mow after 2-3 weeks, then treat new growth. Burning alone will stimulate growth.

Disposal: Cut/pulled material should be removed from site and composted or allowed to decay on upland.



CURRENT LISTINGS:

State Noxious Weed Lists: AL, CT, MA, SC, VT, WA

SC-EPPC: Severe Threat/Grass, Sedges

NC-EPPC/NCNPS: Rank 1 Severe Threat

NC DOT: Threat/Herbaceous Plants

LEARN MORE!

- Invasive.org (images): <http://www.invasiveplantatlas.org/subject.html?sub=3062>
- Cornell Ecology and Management of Invasive Plants Program: <http://www.invasiveplants.net/phragmites/morphology.htm>
- Plant Conservation Alliance: <http://www.nps.gov/plants/ALIEN/fact/phau1.htm>
- University of Maryland, Integration Application Network: <http://ian.umces.edu/pdfs/iannewsletter7.pdf>
- Invasive Plant Management Guide, CT Invasive Plant Working Group (control) http://www.hort.uconn.edu/cipwg/art_pubs/GUIDE/guideframe.htm

Prepared by Sudie Daves Thomas for SC-EPPC and Early Detection & Rapid Response System

Early Detection & Rapid Response (EDRR) Species