

Giant reed

Arundo donax

Description

Persistent stalks should be identifiable year round; its clasping leaf bases distinguish it from similar grasses.

Habit

Large, clump-forming perennial; grows from 2-8 m (6.5-26 ft) tall, forms dense monotypic stands.

Leaves

Alternate, clasping, hairy tuft; 30-60 cm (12-24 in) long and 2-6 cm (0.79-2.4 in) wide; tapered tip; grey-green in color.

Stems

1-8 cm (0.25-2 in) tall, thick, hollow, short distance between nodes results in crowded appearance, resembles a corn stalk.

Flowers

Large, panicle, up to 0.9 m (3 ft) long; blooms late summer to early fall.

Fruits and Seeds





Ability to produce seeds but no evidence that seeds are viable.

Habitat

Native to India. Found in shallow stream and river banks, marshes, other open wetlands and ditches, salt-tolerant.

Reproduction

Thick, knotty rhizomes, and fragments, which may be carried by water currents; viable seed rare in North America.

Similar

Phragmites (*Phragmites australis*) and Elephant grass (*Pennisetum purpureum*).

Monitoring and Rapid Response

Mechanical control is somewhat effective, all fragments must be removed from soil to prevent regrowth. Systemic herbicides, such as glyphosate, may be applied clumps of giant reed, after flowering, either as a cut stump treatment or as a foliar spray. When applying herbicides in or around water or wetlands, be sure to use products labeled for that purpose to avoid harm to aquatic organisms.

Credits

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