

# PEST ALERT

## Arundo donax Giant Reed



### What is it?

Giant reed, also known as wild cane, is a tall perennial grass that can grow to over 20 feet tall. It produces fleshy, creeping rootstalks which form compact masses and tough fibrous roots that penetrate deep into the soil. Leaves are 1-2 inches wide and several inches long, and can be variegated. Flowers are born in long, dense, plume-like panicles.

### What is the threat?

Arundo donax forms dense stands which choke river, stream, and ditch channels causing flooding. It crowds out native vegetation and reduces habitat for wildlife. The dense masses of Arundo ignite easily and can produce intense fires.

### How does it spread?

Arundo donax, native to the Mediterranean, can spread easily and rapidly via root and stem fragments that float downstream and take root. It arrived in Hawaii as an ornamental. Due to its vegetative reproduction and rapid growth rate, it can quickly invade new areas and form pure stands. Once established, Arundo donax has the ability to out compete and completely suppress native vegetation. Even a small fragment of Arundo can root and form a new stand, so care must be taken not to transport Arundo plant parts from one location to another.

### How do we control Arundo?

Arundo can be difficult to control, but the first step is to never plant it or move plant parts or soil containing them to a new location. Arundo can be treated with glyphosate herbicide (Aquamaster) applied to foliage or cut stems, and usually requires repeated treatments.



For more information or to report sightings, call 246-0684