

COMMON REED

invasive
fact sheet



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Common reed invades Vermont's wetlands and river and lake banks. This plant is **easy to see in August** when its flower stalks are in bloom.


DID YOU KNOW?

Common reed (*Phragmites australis*) is found on every continent except Antarctica. Genetic studies distinguish three subspecies, two native and one exotic, of common reed in North America. The non-native subspecies, originating in Eurasia, is now the most common type found in North America, typically invading wetlands and excluding native plants.

- Botanical Research Institute of Texas, 2004.




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Recognize

common reed



broad, flat green leaves

purple flowers in tassels on top of stems



tall grass, reaching 13 feet in height

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For large patches:

 Mow large stands of common reed annually to reduce plant vigor and stem density. Mow between June and July if possible. If not, wait until the end of the growing season in October. Common reed will spread by seed or root pieces so be sure to clean all mowing equipment well after its use to prevent the reed's spread.

For small patches:

-  Hand cut individual stems at the end of July before the flowers produce seed. Plants should be cut below the lowest leaf on the stalk and cut stems can be composted or allowed to decay in a dry area.
-  After cutting, lay a sheet of black plastic over the area. Use sand bags or bricks to secure the edges and keep covered for a year. Check for new growth around the plastic.



non-invasive alternatives



prairie cordgrass
Spartina pectinata



bluejoint grass
Calamagrostis canadensis

blue-flag
iris

*Iris
versicolor*



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big bluestem
grass

*Andropogon
gerardii*



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