

# Arundo donax

## COMMON NAMES

giant reed

## BIOSTATUS

Exotic

## CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

## CATEGORY

Vascular

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Grasses

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Clump-forming bamboo-like grass to 8 m. **Root mass** dense, rhizomes short. **Stems** hollow, erect, becoming semi-lax, woody. **Leaves** alternate, 30–90 × 5 cm, parallel veins, bamboo-like, bluish-green (white-striped form is common in cultivation). **Seedhead** terminal, fluffy.

## SIMILAR TAXA

Similar dimensions to *Phragmites australis*, but *Arundo* has leaves arranged in two rows, while *Phragmites* does not. Generally looks like a leafy bamboo, but has much larger leaves arranged in two rows.

## HABITAT

Often aquatic. Emergent. Moist forest communities, lowland and coastal forest, streamside and gully communities, intertidal areas, shrublands, alluvial areas, roadsides, farm hedges, wastelands, domestic gardens, coastal areas in general. Prefers areas where the soil does not dry out completely.

## GENUS

Arundo

## FAMILY

Poaceae

## AUTHORITY

Arundo donax L.

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## FLOWERING

April

## YEAR NATURALISED

1936

## ORIGIN

Eurasia, Europe, N Africa

## REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Ornamental

## TOLERANCES

Tolerant of very wet soils, intolerant of drought.



Algies Bay, Auckland. Photographer: John Sawyer, Date taken: 01/07/2013, Licence: CC BY-NC.



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## LIFE CYCLE AND DISPERSAL

Perennial. *Arundo* produces loose clumps of lateral rhizomes, which are thickening underground stems that produce new shoots and plants at intervals along the stems. Little or no seed set in New Zealand. Spreads by rhizomes. Broken stems may occasionally resprout. Dispersed by water and soil movement, garden dumping.

## NATIONAL PEST PLANT ACCORD SPECIES

**This plant is listed in the 2020 National Pest Plant Accord.** The National Pest Plant Accord (NPPA) is an agreement to prevent the sale and/or distribution of specified pest plants where either formal or casual horticultural trade is the most significant way of spreading the plant in New Zealand. For up to date information and an electronic copy of the 2020 Pest Plant Accord manual (including plant information and images) visit the [MPI website](#).

## ENVIRONMENTAL WEED (2024)

**This plant is named in a list of 386 environmental weeds in New Zealand 2024 prepared by DOC.** 759 candidate species were considered for inclusion on this new comprehensive list of environmental weeds in New Zealand. The species considered were drawn from published lists of weed species, lists of plants that must be reported or managed by law if observed, existing national and regional programmes and agreements for pest management, and species already managed by the Department of Conservation (DOC). Candidate species were then assessed to see if they were fully naturalised and whether they have more than minor impacts in natural ecosystems. Read the full report [here](#).

## NVS CODE

ARUDON

## MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/arundo-donax/>

## PDF DATE

25 May 2026