

Pseudosasa japonica

COMMON NAMES

arrow bamboo

BIOSTATUS

Exotic

CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Grasses

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Medium sized bamboo up to about 5 m, forming dense thickets with extensive rhizomes. **Culm** dark green, banded white just below nodes. **Branches** one per node, sometimes 2–3 at upper nodes. **Leaf-sheath** glabrous, often purplish above. **Leaf-blade** 3.5 × 25 cm long, one on each branch. This species has flowered frequently in NZ, the inflorescence is purplish on the exposed side, spikelets 4–9 cm, flattened.

SIMILAR TAXA

P. japonica is the bamboo species most commonly known to flower in NZ. Distinctive vegetative characters include round, not notched, stem, the white band below the node and single branches on lower nodes, with 2–3 on upper nodes.

HABITAT

Terrestrial. Roadsides, riverbanks, in or around plantations, especially near garden boundaries, in scrub and on forest margins, abandoned garden sites and waste places (Edgar and Connor 2000).

GENUS

Pseudosasa

FAMILY

Poaceae

AUTHORITY

Pseudosasa japonica (Steud.) Makino

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

FLOWERING

Flowered throughout 80's not since.

YEAR NATURALISED

1968

ORIGIN

Japan, S. Korea

REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Ornamental



Te Awa Kairangi / Hutt River, Silverstream, Upper Hutt. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 17/06/2006, Licence: CC BY.



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LIFE CYCLE AND DISPERSAL

Perennial. Can flower continuously for several years. The thickets do not die completely after flowering although large parts often do (Edgar and Connor 2000). Spread is vegetative or by planting, Viable seed is uncommon (ibid.). No regeneration from seed so far has been reported (ibid.)

ETYMOLOGY

japonica: Of Japan

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

PSEJAP

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Edgar E, Connor HE. 2000. Flora of New Zealand. Vol. V. Grasses. Manaaki Whenua Press, Christchurch, NZ. 650 p.

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/pseudosasa-japonica/>

PDF DATE

25 May 2026