

# Phragmites australis

## COMMON NAMES

phragmites

## BIOSTATUS

Exotic

## CATEGORY

Vascular

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Grasses

## SIMPLIFIED DESCRIPTION

Large (commonly 3 m tall) forming dense beds on the edges of water bodies. Bamboo-like with tall canes but these are not woody and die off over winter. Flower heads flange feathery, somewhat like pampas flowers.

## FLOWER COLOURS

Green, White

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Robust summer green grass, growing to 3 m or more tall, with stout far-reaching rhizomes. **Stalks** are leafy, rigid, erect, bamboo-like, with many nodes. **Leaves** bluish-green, up to 60 cm long and 3 cm wide, often aligning in one direction when older. **Flower** head is purplish, silky, and almost up to 40 cm long.

## SIMILAR TAXA

Giant reed (*Arundo donax*) and bamboos. Giant reed is taller with arching stems. Bamboos have stalked leaves rather than leaves that attach directly to the stalk in the case of phragmites.

## DISTRIBUTION

Locally naturalised Hawke's Bay, Tasman, Canterbury, all known sites targeted for eradication.

## HABITAT

Still and slow flowing water bodies, wetlands and reported from salt marshes overseas.

## CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

## DETAILED TAXONOMY

## FAMILY

Poaceae

## AUTHORITY

*Phragmites australis* (Cav.) Trin. exSteud.

## ECOLOGY

## FLOWERING

Summer

## FRUITING

Not known to fruit in New Zealand

## YEAR NATURALISED

1950. There was an early record (1864) by von Haast (Connor et al. 1996), but unlikely to have established

## ORIGIN

Native range includes every continent except Antarctica, but not native in New Zealand.

## REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Ornamental pond and garden plant.



## CONTROL TECHNIQUES

Notify Ministry for Primary Industries if found.

## LIFE CYCLE AND DISPERSAL

Spreads by rhizomes and stem fragments, possibly by mowers. Also deliberate plantings.

## WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

OBL: Obligate Wetland

Almost always is a hydrophyte, rarely in uplands (non-wetlands).

## OTHER INFORMATION

### ETYMOLOGY

**australis**: Southern

## 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](#).

## NVS CODE

PHRAUS

## REFERENCING AND CITATIONS

### REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Champion P. et al. 2020. Freshwater Invasive Species of New Zealand 2020. NIWA publication.

<https://docs.niwa.co.nz/library/public/FreInSpec.pdf>

Connor HE, Dawson MI, Keating RD, Gill LS. 1998. Chromosome numbers of *Phragmites australis* (Arundineae: Gramineae) in New Zealand. *NZ Journal of Botany* 36(3): 465-469. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0028825X.1998.9512584>

## ATTRIBUTION

Factsheet prepared by Paul Champion and Deborah Hofstra (NIWA).

## MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/phragmites-australis/>

## PDF DATE

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