

# EURASIAN PHRAGMITES

*Phragmites australis*



Be on the lookout for this invader!



Credit Michigan Tech Research Institute (MTRI)

**Description:** The "Common Reed" is a stout, warm-season perennial grass ranging in height from 6-15 feet. Forms dense, impenetrable stands, in contrast with the native subspecies, which typically occurs in a colony of scattered stems.

**Habitat:** Wetlands, ditches, streambanks, lake shorelines, and other wet areas. Tolerates road salt.

**Mode of Spread:** Most commonly, *Phragmites* spreads by horizontal above-ground stolons and underground rhizomes. The use of maintenance equipment in wetland areas (particularly ditches) and shoreline erosion caused by waves and ice can move live rhizome fragments that establish new stands. It can also be spread by wind or animal-borne seeds. Once established, *Phragmites* is difficult to control or eradicate.

# IDENTIFICATION

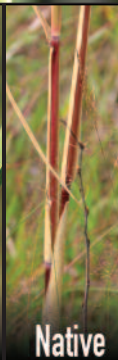
LIGULE



LEAVES AND STEMS



Invasive



Native

**Leaves:** Flat, smooth leaf blades: 10-20" long, 0.4-1.4" wide. Leaf sheaths stay attached even after stem dies. Ligule consists of many fine white hairs.

**Stems:** Upright, rigid and hollow, dull yellow or green, covered by leaf sheaths. In contrast, native stems develop a bright red color.

**Flowers:** Dense branched clusters at the end of each stem, becoming open and feathery at maturity.

**Fruit and Seeds:** Seeds with white hairs below that are almost as long as the seed; abundant seeds (up to 2,000 per head).

**Rhizomes:** Can spread 10 or more feet and several feet deep in one growing season.

FLOWERS



RHIZOMES



EXTREMELY AGGRESSIVE!



Photos: Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council

## Known to occur at these locations in Northern Michigan:

- Bear River
- Tannery Creek
- Mullett Creek
- Lake Michigan
- Lake Huron
- Black Lake
- Cedar River
- Intermediate Lake
- Lake Charlevoix
- Steele Lake
- Jordan River
- Black River

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