

“B” Rated Weeds

A weed of economic importance which is regionally abundant,
but may have limited distribution in some counties

Giant reed
Arundo donax

**Other common names: giant cane, Spanish reed
and giant reed grass.**

USDA symbol: ARDO
ODA rating: B



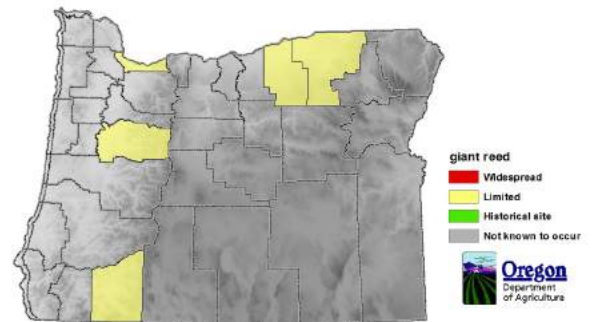
Introduction: *Arundo donax*, a true giant in the grass family, often growing 20' high, has devastated waterways throughout the southwestern United States. Originally planted widely for windbreaks, erosion control and an ornamental. *Arundo* is commercially grown in some parts of the world. Attempts to grow in the Columbia Basin as a biofuel replacement for the coal fired power plant in Boardman, OR did not prove to be economically viable; ODA is overseeing eradicated of all *Arundo* plants in this trial area in Morrow and Umatilla Counties.

Distribution in Oregon: Small patches exist in landscapes and water gardens throughout the Northwest. Oregon's first documented escaped population was identified in 2006 on Bear Creek near Medford. The second population composed of two patches, was located along an irrigation canal in Jackson County near Talent OR. It has not been observed spreading from ornamental plantings in the Willamette Valley, but it could survive and spread if introduced along the banks of the Willamette River.

Description: *Arundo* is one of the worlds largest herbaceous grasses growing in dense compact masses reaching a height up to 20'. It accomplishes this feat by utilizing C4 respiration, the same metabolic process found in sugar cane. Flowers are born on large plume-like panicles between March and September but flowering and seed production is extremely rare on non existant in North America. Leaves are alternate growing up to 70 cm in length and 2-6 cm wide. Fleshy, almost bulbous creeping root stocks anchor deep into soils and form dense root mats that break up during flood events. *Arundo* thrives especially well in sandy or moist well-drained soils commonly found in riparian zones subjected to annual flooding. The grass grows vigorously in tropical to warm temperate climates producing hollow stems 1-4 cm across. In colder temperate zones, reeds die back each winter or may take on a very raggedy appearance during mild winters. In warmer climates the canes are perennial. *Arundo* can also survive freezing and dry conditions for several years in dry sites of the Columbia basin.

Impacts: Economic impacts in California and the Southwest resulting from flood damage, water loss, structural damage, and increased fire hazard. Canes can create large debris piles that threaten the structural integrity of bridges and other in-stream structures during flood events. *Arundo* can completely dominate streams and flood channels and removes large amounts of in-stream and groundwater that could be used for irrigation, drinking water, native plants, and wildlife.

Biological controls: Several species of biological control agents are approved for release against *Arundo donax* and are currently utilized in the southern states. Due to the limited infestation of *Arundo* in Oregon and the lack of needed year-round warmth required for multiple insect generations per year, no attempts at biocontrol of have been conducted in Oregon.



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