

Common reed

(*Phragmites australis* ssp. *Australis*)

Currently in Montana, noxious weed infest about 8.2 million acres. Many of these state listed noxious weeds were brought to America as ornamentals for gardens, medicinal purposes, by accident in discarded soil from a ship's ballast, or unintentionally in bags of seed brought from other parts of the world. Whatever the cause of introduction non-native plant species have found their way onto Montana's state listed noxious weed list.

Common reed is native to western Asia and eastern Europe. It has a limited presence in Montana. If you think you've found this plant, please contact your county weed coordinator immediately. Identification is challenging because it looks very similar to a native plant, *Phragmites australis* ssp. *americanus*. Common reed inhabits marshes, swamps, ditches, and the edges of ponds and lakes.

The stem of this invader is hollow and grows from 5-15' tall to form dense stands which impact wildlife and waterfowl that nest at the edge of waterbodies. Common reed stems are light green in the spring and mature to light brown in the fall. Its leaves are smooth, flat, green, and can grow up to 20" long and 2" wide. This plant produces a long, feather-like flowerhead that is green, purple or golden and can be 6-20" long.

Common reed reproduces through both seeds and dense, creeping underground stems and by stolons. Common reed can be controlled by mechanical removal, grazing, herbicides and fire.

Please take a few moments to learn about noxious weeds. If noxious weeds are not currently a problem in your area, they may be in the near future. For more information about Montana's state listed noxious weeds, regulated plants, or weed species listed on your county weed list, please contact your local county weed district (can list weed district name here... ex: Lewis & Clark County Weed District) at _(406)_(Phone number)_. Or you can contact the Montana Department of Agriculture at (406) 444-5600.