



INVASIVE PHRAGMITES

November 22, 2023

Invasive Phragmites is a significant threat to wetlands, shorelines, and other sensitive habitat. The plant forms dense stands that can choke waterways and displace wildlife, including species at risk that depend on biodiverse wetland environments. Invasive Phragmites spreads aggressively and has become one of the most significant threats to Great Lakes coastal habitats and inland wetlands. The main differences between Invasive Phragmites and the Native Phragmites are their seed heads and stems. ***Invasive Phragmites grows in dense stands***, with full fluffy seed heads, blue-green leaves, and beige culms (stems) persisting through the winter. Native Phragmites usually has more reddish-brown stems, yellow-green leaves, and smaller, sparser seed heads.

INVASIVE PHRAGMITES



Phragmites australis ssp. australis; Also called European Reed

Growth characteristics: Very dense stands of new and standing dead stems from the previous year's growth.
Culm: (Stem) Can reach 15 feet, are very rigid, and rough in texture. Stalks are light green to beige in colour and ligules (connection between leaf and stem) are hairy.
Leaves: Blue-green and often darker in colour than Native Phragmites. Leaf sheaths are mostly present and adhering tightly to culm of overwintered plants.
Seedheads: Fluffy in appearance and densely populated with seeds (glumes).

NATIVE PHRAGMITES



Phragmites australis or *ssp. americanus*; Also called Common Reed

Growth Characteristics: Native Phragmites typically occurs in low density stands, often coexisting with other native species, but it can occur in dense stands more typical of the introduced form.
Culm: Smooth, thin, and red to chestnut in colour towards the base. Spots on culms can occur from a native fungus not adapted to the invasive form.
Leaves: Leaf sheaths fall off the stem once the leaf dies and are typically lighter in color than Invasive Phragmites.
Seedheads: Sparse compared to Invasive Phragmites.



If you're interested in learning more about Invasive Phragmites or taking part in Thunder Bay's Regional Phragmites Collaboration, reach out to stewardship@lakeheadca.com or call (807) 344-5857.



Invasive Phragmites in the Lakehead Watershed; dense seed heads and large stand.

REPORT SUSPECTED INVASIVE SPECIES

Visit: <https://www.eddmaps.org/ontario/>

Call the Invasive Species Hotline: 1-800-563-7711



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