

Arundo grass, Giant reed

Arundo donax, Poaceae



Control: Cut the arundo grass close to the ground and spray herbicide on the regrowth, while it is still short. Several repeat sprayings will be required. Dig out the root mass and dispose of all plant parts at a refuse transfer station or by burning. Gloves and protective clothing should be worn when handling arundo grass.

- giant grass
- grows to 6-8 m
- one of world's worst invasive species
- fast growth smothers native species and blocks waterways, causing flooding
- looks like bamboo, but has softer, drooping canes, especially around outside edges
- wide grey-green leaves may be striped and have sharp edges which can cut
- skin contact can cause dermatitis
- large root mass of rhizomes can be 1 m thick and spread over several hectares
- fluffy purplish flower head rarely produces seed in NZ
- grows from cane and rhizome fragments
- prefers sunny, damp riparian environment but tolerates a wide variety of soils and salinity
- dry arundo grass is very flammable
- used overseas for industrial cellulose production, to make reeds for woodwind instruments and, historically, organ pipes - note that some musicians have developed serious contact dermatitis from its use
- originally from Eurasia

