

LAKE COUNTY WEED MANAGEMENT AREA WEED CONTROL PROGRAM ALERT

Giant Reed

Arundo donax

Grass Species

Non-native Invasive Weed*

Identification Tips

- Cane-like appearance similar to bamboo
- Mature stands can exceed 33 feet
- Canes are hollow
- Small yellow flowers along entire stem
- Small, short-lived leaves can be simple, but are Generally three-parted

Biology

- Flowers from March to June
- Reproduces by its rhizome root system
- Canes and rhizomes broken off during flood migrate downstream, colonizing new sites
- It is among the fastest growing terrestrial plant in the world, growing nearly 4 inches a day

Impacts

- Displace native and beneficial plants and crowds out native plants
- Imports fire into riparian areas, native plants take much longer to regrow after fire
- Has no food or habitat value for wildlife
- Dense stands impede movement of wildlife
- **Uses water at a much higher rate than native vegetation**

Distribution

- Found throughout Lake County, including riparian areas, along the shoreline of lakes and reservoirs, and along roadsides and right-of-way
- Thrives in full sun, but will also establish in shady areas



Seed heads are not viable, Arundo reproduces by through its rhizome root system or by a cane coming into contact with water or damp soil. Spreads rapidly, growing 4 inches a day and so dense that it is often impenetrable. It will grow up through asphalt!



Arundo is native to the Mediterranean, Africa, and Asia. It can be found from Maryland to California.

*Control is not required for Lake County by the State of California, but it is recommended wherever feasible.

Questions? _____
Lake County Agriculture Dept.
707-263-0217

What You Can Do

There are no legal requirements to control *Arundo* in Lake County, but removal is recommended as part of forestry, pasture, and natural area management. You can prevent *Arundo* from spreading by removing it from your property.

Control Methods

For best results, control methods should be adaptive and employed throughout several growing seasons.

MANUAL: For small sites with fewer plants, cut the canes at ground level and cover with 4 mil plastic. Dig a trench around the perimeter of the plant to bury the edge of the plastic and weight the center down to hold in place. This solarizes the rhizome root system and effectively eradicates the stand. Be sure to stack the cuttings on dry ground to avoid resprout from the canes.

MECHANICAL: Cutting down mature stands is best when used in conjunction with herbicides (see below). Cut at ground level, stack cutting on dry ground. Return to the stand after two to three weeks and proceed as below.

CHEMICAL: Follow labels exactly as written and only use products appropriate and legal for the site. Herbicides should only be applied at the rates specified on the label.

After two to three weeks after cutting, apply a foliar spray of 2% solution of glyphosate to the resprouted canes. This method will take three to five years of repeated control.



Before Treatment



After Treatment

Foliar herbicide is most effective after full leaf development and before fall senescence. Using the bend and spray method, begin folding the canes in towards the center of the plant without breaking the canes, spray the leaves and canes with a 2% solution of glyphosate until the plant is laid down (see before and after photos). This is a very effective control method, usually requiring only one treatment, be sure to monitor for three to five years. However, glyphosate is “non-selective” and will injure any foliage that comes in contact with. So make sure not to drip on desirable plants. Chemical control options may differ for private, commercial, and government agency users. For questions about herbicide use, contact the Lake County Agriculture Department.