

Have you seen this invasive plant?

Common reed is a tall, aggressive grass that outcompetes native plants and reduces wildlife habitat.

Learn more at www.nwcb.wa.gov



Common reed is a large perennial grass that spreads mainly by rhizomes. Stems are woody, rough and hollow, growing to 12 or more feet tall.



King County NWCB



King County NWCB

Leaves are stiff, lance-shaped, 8-16 inches long and up to 1.5 inches wide. Leaves are green to gray-green in color.



Common reed has feathery, tan to purple, plume-like flowerheads that are from 6-16 inches long. Plants bloom July to October. Flowers are silky and densely arranged. Here, old and new flowerheads are pictured.

Why is common reed (*Phragmites australis*) a noxious weed?

- It forms dense monocultures in wetlands.
- Common reed creates a dense thatch layer that prevents other vegetation from growing and is a barrier to wildlife movement.

Native vs. non-native common reed

- There is also a **native** strain of common reed. The **native** strain has a yellow-green leaf, smooth stems, a red collar at its leaf base, flowerheads that are less bushy and tends to drop leaves in winter. The **non-native**, invasive strain has darker leaves, rough or ridged stems, a white collar at its leaf base, bushier flowerheads and tends to hold its leaves in winter.
- Both strains can be found in wet areas of eastern and western Washington, though the invasive strain is a lot more common.

What can you do?

- Learn to identify this Class B noxious weed.
- Contact your county noxious weed control board for identification assistance.
- Report any sightings to your county noxious weed control board or to noxiousweeds@agr.wa.gov.



Washington State
**Noxious Weed
Control Board**

