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](http://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.

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.