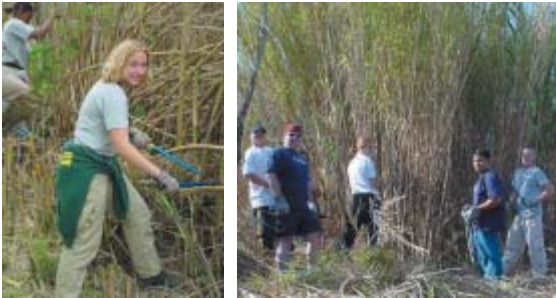


SACRAMENTO WEED WARRIORS - How are we removing Giant Reed?

Sacramento Weed Warriors conducts removal work groups every month. Community volunteers of all ages are participating on the first Saturday of each month and groups may schedule their own special events. SWW provides the necessary tools, gloves, & supervision for each of these work groups.



Giant reed is not easy to remove and control. First, volunteers cut down tall mature plants and remove stalks from the immediate area. Then, during warm weather, after emerging giant reed shoots reach 2-4 feet in height (shoots can grow as much as a foot a week), a certified applicator applies a selective herbicide to the leaves. Volunteers then return regularly to monitor for regrowth. Depending on conditions in each area, more than one application may be necessary. Ecologists have determined that this cut, regrow and spray technique is a cost-effective method to control and eventually eradicate giant reed.



What can YOU do?

- **Report giant reed sightings**
If you see giant reed growing along a waterway, or on private property, send us a report. SWW will work with the property owner, or the appropriate government agency, and offer to remove it.
- **Join a Sacramento Weed Warriors work group**
SWW conducts community work groups on the first Saturday of each month. Giant reed is one of the top-priority invasive weeds being removed from the American River Parkway and other waterways in the Sacramento region.
- **Visit the California Native Plant Society - Sacramento Valley Chapter web site**
More details about the SWW project and invasive weeds are available online at www.sacvalleycnps.org.

How to contact us

Within the Sacramento Area

Frank Wallace, Project Director
Sacramento Weed Warriors
Tel: (916) 213-4682, Email: frankw2@pacbell.net

In other areas of Northern California

Contact the staff of the Arundo Eradication Program at the Sonoma Ecology Center
Tel: (707) 996-0712 Email: arundo@vom.com

Sacramento Weed Warriors (SWW) is a community stewardship initiative of the California Native Plant Society-Sacramento Valley Chapter. Many local organizations, including the American River Parkway Foundation and the Sacramento Urban Creeks Council, provide support. SWW is currently receiving funding to implement the Community Stewardship Component of the American River Parkway-Invasive Plant Management Project (ARP-IPMP). During Phase 1 of this long term project, IPMP professional crews and SWW volunteers are removing 5 invasive plant species located on 653 acres in the Parkway. On a long term basis, SWW will be responsible for monitoring more than 800 acres to be sure that new plants are treated or removed before more seeds are produced.

The American River Parkway-Invasive Plant Management Project is funded by grants from the California Wildlife Conservation Board, California Department of Transportation, and the Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency. The project is administered by the Sacramento County Department of Regional Parks, Recreation and Open Space. Loran May and Associates is the project manager.



An environmental stewardship project of the California Native Plant Society-Sacramento Valley Chapter

Giant Reed

(Arundo donax)

Arundo



Printed on recycled paper.

Invasive Weed Fact Sheet

Special thanks to Supriya Mody for the graphic design.

What is Giant Reed?

- Giant reed (also called Arundo) is a tall plant in the grass family. It grows rapidly and can reach more than 20 feet in height. Giant reed stalks resemble those of bamboo but are usually less than an inch in diameter.
- The pale green, foot-long leaves are 1-2 inches in width and extend out from the central stalk. At a distance, the leaves resemble corn leaves.
- Giant reed usually grows in moist areas, close to the edge of rivers or creeks, but it can survive & spread in dry upland areas as well.



How does it spread?

- In North America, Giant reed spreads primarily from its rhizomes, rather than from seeds.
- During floods or other disturbances, sections of rhizomes can be exposed by scouring and break away from the main plant to be carried down stream. If they settle in moist soil, these sections can start new giant reed colonies.
- Giant reed can also spread when small segments of the stalk (with nodes) are transported downriver and reach a location where roots can form.



Why is it a problem?

- Giant reed aggressively invades banks along rivers and streams, crowding out native plants and disrupting the natural balance of riparian habitats (the sensitive areas immediately along the edge of waterways).
- Giant reed replaces the native plants that provide food and shelter for deer, birds, insects and other wildlife.
- The woody stems are highly flammable, increasing fire risk. When fires do occur, heat from giant reed can act as a "fuel ladder" resulting in intense crown fires that can destroy native trees and threaten nearby buildings.
- Because of its wide leaves and rapid growth, giant reed consumes large amounts of water, an increasingly scarce resource in California.
- Giant reed can create erosion and contribute to flooding. During high water flows, large sections of roots and soil can break away, contributing to erosion. Along smaller creeks, plant infestations alter stream flows and redirect water to opposite banks, also resulting in increased erosion.

Where does it come from?

- Giant reed is native to northern India and Nepal. It was transported to Europe and likely brought to California by Spanish settlers.
- Because of its thick root system, it was planted along smaller waterways to prevent erosion.
- It was also used for fencing and building materials. It is still grown commercially and its stem is used as the reed for musical instruments.
- Brought to northern California, it was planted along irrigation canals for bank stabilization and as a wind break to reduce damage to crops.