

# ARUNDO DONAX

**AKA:** Giant Reed, Giant Cane, Arundo, Bamboo Reed, False Bamboo



Photo provided courtesy of The Nature Conservancy.

## Alien Invader!

A weed can be any plant that doesn't belong in a given area, but a non-native invasive plant is specifically harmful to the local native habitat. They are alien invaders to our watersheds. They can cause many watershed issues such as affecting the habitat of native wildlife, including threatened and endangered species; reducing water quality and water availability; increasing fuel load and creating wildfire hazards; and causing flooding, erosion, and sedimentation problems.

## Arundo

Arundo is a bamboo-like grass that grows rapidly up to four inches a day and up to 30 feet tall! It likes moist soils and temperate climates. Competing with native species such as willows and cottonwoods, it uses three times more water and is extremely flammable. Arundo clogs up streams and channels, increasing the risk of floods and property damage. It chokes out native vegetation and provides little habitat for native wildlife.

## Origin

*Arundo donax* is most likely native to India and has been in the Mediterranean for centuries. It was imported to the United States by Spanish settlers. Arundo has many historical uses including: reinforcing adobe, musical instruments, fencing, roofing, and basket-making. It can be harvested for paper and fiber production. Arundo has also been used as an ornamental plant or as a fast-growing privacy screen. Arundo has been widely planted for erosion control, but is not effective for this purpose except in the short term.

## The Problem

Arundo has spread to every major watercourse in Southern California. By the 1820's it was well established in the Los Angeles River. Eradication is very difficult and very seldom 100% effective in a single attempt. Continued monitoring and aggressive removal is necessary to rid an area of Arundo.

## Solutions

Arundo eradication and management efforts must be coordinated. The longer removal and eradication is delayed, the greater the task and cost will become. The most common current methods of removal include physical removal with an herbicide application. For more information or to get involved in removal efforts, please contact your local Ventura County Resource Conservation District or Natural Resources Conservation Service office at (805) 386-4685.



Ventura County Resource Conservation District

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