

# COMMON REED

(*Phragmites australis*)

Oneida Lake Status:  
Common



Common reed flower cluster  
US Army Corps of Engineers

- Grows in wet/marshy areas
- Very similar to the native common reed
- 5 to 15 feet tall

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*Phragmites australis*, or common reed, is a grass species present across the United States and southern Canada. It consists of two subspecies; one is native and the other is from Europe. It is believed that the more aggressive, European reed is largely responsible for the early 20<sup>th</sup> century range expansion of this plant. It has caused damage to aquatic ecosystems from coast to coast by outcompeting native mixed plant communities.



A stand of *Phragmites* in the Montezuma Wetlands Complex  
David Spier

Wetland and wet ditch areas surrounding Oneida Lake are ideal habitats for *Phragmites*. *Phragmites* has proliferated in the Oneida Lake watershed and Central New York region over the last decade. Check out the roadside ditches, streamside margins, and marshes around Oneida Lake and most likely you will see these towering plants, 5 to 15 feet tall. When the wind blows, *Phragmites* wave like plumes in the breeze. Similar to purple loosestrife, the common reed outcompetes native plants like cattail.



A dense stand of common reed  
University of Albany

Prepared by:

Kristen Holeck and Ed Mills  
Cornell Biological Field Station

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