

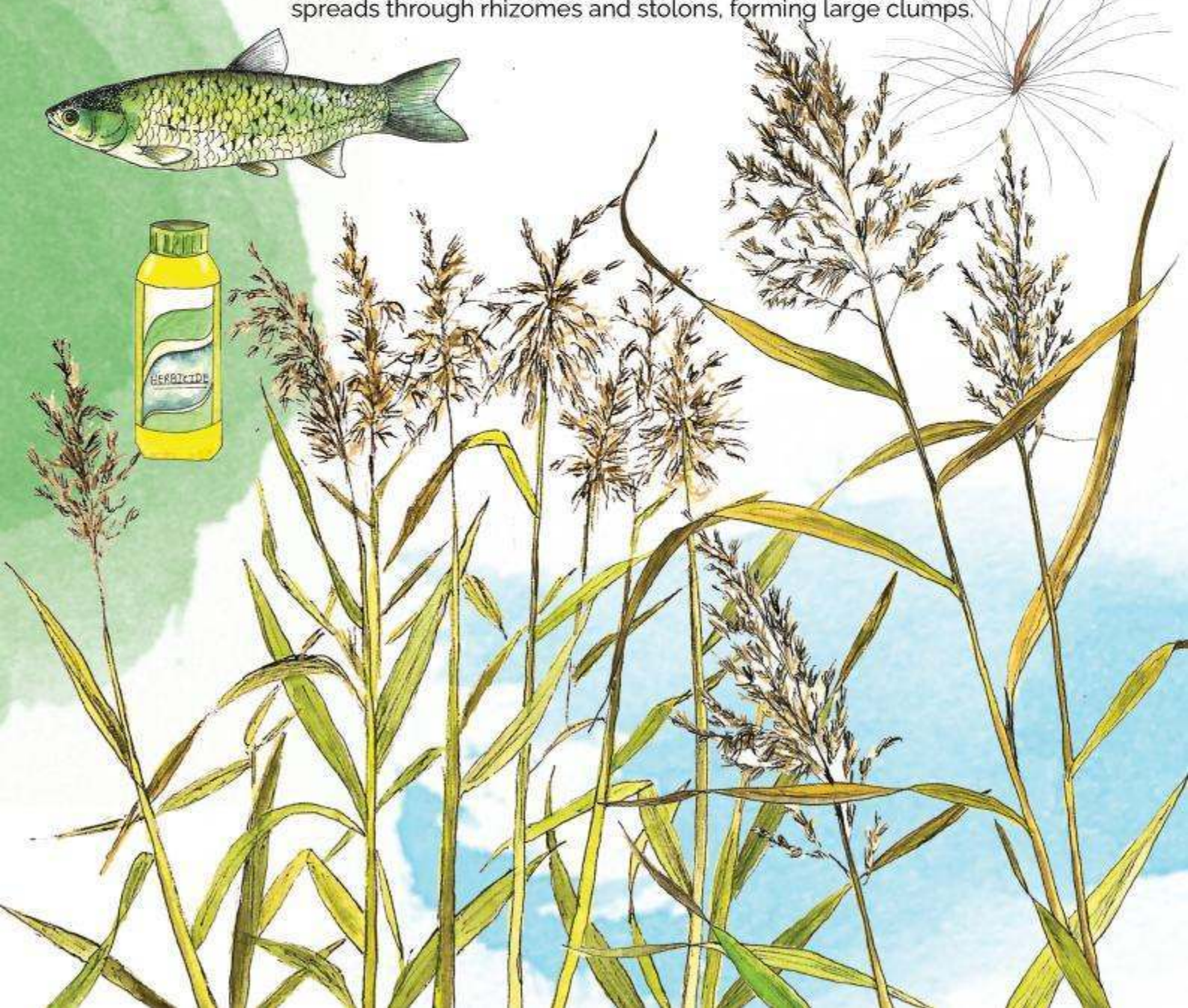
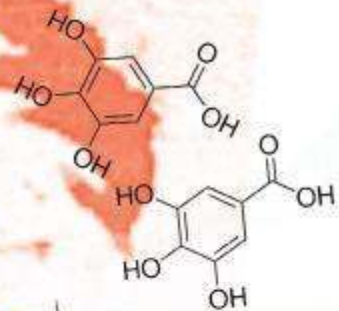
SPECIES: *PHRAGMITES AUSTRALIS*

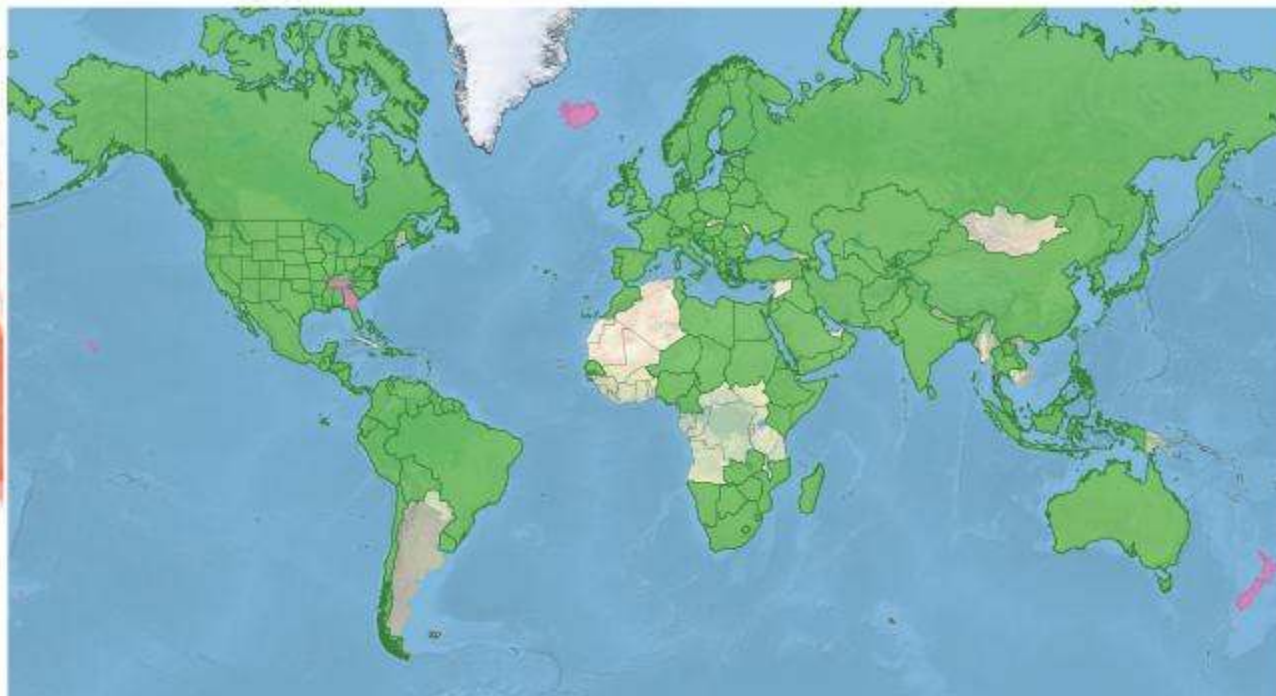
COMMON NAME: COMMON REED

FAMILY: POACEAE

Plant Description

It is a perennial grass that can grow 4 to 6 m in height. It is commonly seen in marshy wetlands or in transition areas between terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems. It has extensive rhizomes and also stolons. The plant has a rigid stem with hollow internodes. Leaves are alternate with leaf blades up to 60 cm long and 8-60 mm wide. Leaves have a smooth surface and a very thin, thread-like apex. Leaves form a leaf sheath at the base; leaf sheaths are overlapping and loosely arranged. Flowers are in the form of a drooping feathery inflorescence, 15 to 50 cm long, tan brown to purplish in colour. It produces large numbers of seeds that are wind- and water-dispersed; it also spreads through rhizomes and stolons, forming large clumps.





CABI, 2022. *Phragmites australis*. In: Invasive Species Compendium. Wallingford, UK: CAB International. <https://www.cabi.org/isc/datasheet/40514> #toDistributionMaps [accessed: 25/01/2022]

Note: Although depicted otherwise on this map, the plant is considered invasive in India

Introduced
Native
Origin not recorded

***Phragmites australis* POACEAE**

Origin: Temperate Eurasia

Introduction: Unknown

Impacts: The plant is known to remove nutrients from the soil in excess, thereby negatively affect surrounding plants and reducing biodiversity. The roots of the common reed can produce a chemical called gallic acid (3,4,5-trihydroxy benzoic acid), which is proposed by some scientists to cause cell death of surrounding native plants. In aquatic ecosystems its thickets can block the flow of water, which negatively affects irrigation and fishing. The plant can also act as a host for different cereal virus diseases including maize dwarf mosaic virus, barley yellow dwarf virus, and sugarcane mosaic virus (seen in Turkey).

Management: The plant has to be managed at early stages by removal or herbicide application because once the stands mature, frequent cutting of stems multiple times a year along with burning will be required for its control.

In Japan, the grass carp (*Ctenopharyngodon idella*), is used as a biological control agent—the grass carp eats the young shoots of *P. australis* reeds. However, in India the grass carp, which was introduced as an aquaculture species, is itself an invasive fish.

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