

WANTED

DEAD OR . . . WELL, DEAD

Common Reed *Phragmites australis*

This nasty customer has terrorized thousands of acres of wetlands in Connecticut at a growth rate of **3% per year**. There's a native version but what you see in this area is its invasive cousin. It spreads by both rhizomes and airborne seeds and pushes out everything else in its way, ultimately destroying wetland habitat.



Recognize it by: Tall, reedy habit (up to 15'), with purplish feathery plumes in late summer.

Control it by: Sheer force of will. At the end of July, cut the stalks down to about 6" the ground, place them in a pile (preferably covered with plastic) and allow them to decay completely. You can also try hand-pulling but it is tough. If the patch is small you can put black plastic over it as well and leave it through the winter. You will have to repeat this process for at least 3 (count'em) years. *Bear in mind: you will probably never get rid of all of it.*



Due to phragmites' proximity to wetlands, a special permit is necessary to use herbicides or burn the area—which is not recommended in any case.

Native Alternatives: Swamp Milkweed, Big Bluestem, Pussy Willow

*The Hampton Invasive-of-the-Month is brought to you by your friends at the **Hampton Conservation Commission**. We meet the 3rd Wednesday of each month at 6:30pm at Town Hall. **Join us!***