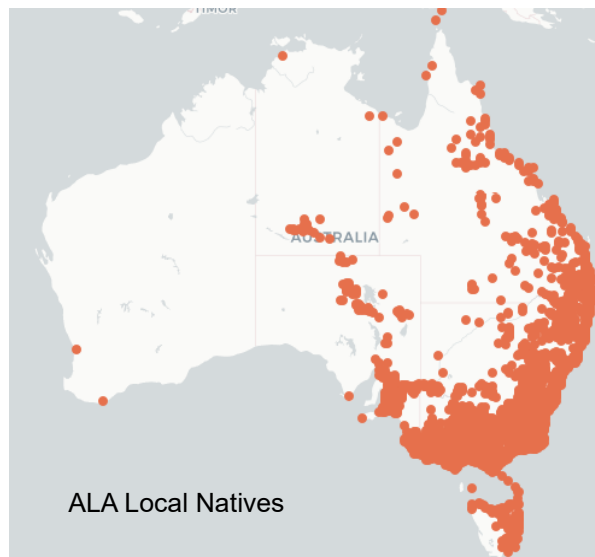


Poaceae

Phragmites australis common reed



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ETYMOLOGY

(frag-MY-teez) Greek phragma = a hedges or screen; alluding to fence-like boarding waterways; crowded together along the water's edges; The species australis (oz-TRAHlis) southern;

LIFEFORM

Grass 2-3 m x 3 m Spread

STATUS

Distributed throughout Australia; Common per site (Population size) clonal plant found in brackish water and tidal streams and along saline springs;

OCCURS

Coolum Qld, Barrington Tops NSW, Keilor Plains Vic, SA, WA, NT

HABITAT

Brackish waterways, drains

LEAVES

Blades, 20-60 x 3 cm, flat somewhat deciduous alternate along stem linear-ovate in shape drawn out to a fine tip;

FLOWERS

Terminal drooping much-branched panicle 15-40 cm, silky white, green to purple-brown, hairs on inflorescence axis which reflect light & make the inflorescence look shiny.

Flowering times April, May, June

FRUIT

Terminal panicle of fluffy florets produces small seeds **Fruiting times** Sept, Oct, Nov, Dec

STEM

Thick unbranched stems with creeping runners below;

ETHNOBOTANY

Fodder, mulch, waste water treatment; Suitable for ephemeral waterways lake edges depressions, recreated wetlands, revegetation of large ecosystems; Grown extensively in Europe & harvested in Romania to manufacture cardboard printing paper, insulation & thatching. Good soaker of nutrients in shallow water

TOLERANCE

Tolerates dry spells fresh or brackish under 2 m deep Salt tolerant, high salinity, waterlogging and indicator of acid sulphate soils. (Indicator of something wrong as *Phragmites australis* is only plant which can tolerate acid sulphate conditions)

WILDLIFE

Provides shelter especially for waterbirds and frogs;

BUTTERFLY

Taractrocera papyria White-banded Grass dart, *Telicota colon* Pale grass Dart

INDIGENOUS USES

Young underground shoots eaten. Little food value, minor food source, Aborigines made bags, baskets and reed spears; Branches used in construction of shelters and flowers in ceremonies.

Taken internally for acute arthritis, jaundice and food poisoning

ID FEATURE

Glumes very unequal + shorter than spikelet; rachilla with long white on callus + Lemma hairless;