



Common bamboo

(*Bambusa vulgaris*)

Originated in southern Asia. Widely introduced in the 1800s and grown for an array of uses, including construction materials, land management (erosion), furniture, textiles, ornaments and human consumption. The plant is now present in most tropical areas of the planet.

Description

- A perennial, ligneous cane (grass), producing rhizomes, capable of reaching a height of 20 metres, in colours ranging from green to yellowish-brown, with vertical streaks
- The stalk (stem or cane) is woody and hollow, 5 to 35 cm in diameter, with nodes every 20 to 45 cm. Stalks have dark hairs when young, but become smooth and glossy with age
- Above-ground roots form in rings on the basal nodes, with rhizomes that spread horizontally in the soil
- On the upper internodes, branches form with a stipule and leaves
- Leaves are smooth, alternating, lanceolate and deciduous, 6 to 30 cm long, 1 to 4 cm wide, green to yellow in colour, with urticating hairs at the base
- The inflorescence comprises rows of seeds up to 3 cm long, no production of fruit

Ecology and reproduction

- The plant can adapt to many types of soil, but prefers wetlands (river banks and around lakes). It can survive short flooding, but is vulnerable to cold weather
- The plant has a life cycle of 20 to 40 years
- Asexual reproduction, via the rhizomes. Stalk cuttings can also throw roots and produce new stands
- Flowering takes place simultaneously among the stalks in a stand, one time after several years of growth, then the plant dies

Documentation

- Foch T. & Van Laere G. 2016. Méthode pour réguler et éradiquer le bambou (*Bambusa vulgaris*). Fiche Technique. ONF & Parc National de la Guadeloupe, 11 pp.
- Invasive Species Compendium. *Bambusa vulgaris* (common bamboo). Document available at <http://www.cabi.org/isc/datasheet/8398>.
- Coudair K. 2005. Recherche des méthodes de contrôle et de valorisation du bambou dans la zone centrale du parc national de Guadeloupe. Rapport de stage. 56 pp.

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Classification

Order	<i>Poales</i>
Family	<i>Poaceae</i>
Genus	<i>Bambusa</i>
Species	<i>Bambusa vulgaris</i> (Schrad. Ex J.C.Wendl., 1810)

