



Giant cane

(*Arundo donax*)

Originated in Asia. Introduced probably during the Roman period. Grown for numerous uses, notably for musical instruments (clarinets, saxophones, oboes, etc.), reed pens, reed fencing, baskets, landscaping (windbreaks), bio-energy.

Description

- A perennial, ligneous cane (grass), producing rhizomes, can reach a height of 5 to 6 metres and has a life span of over 10 years
- Erect plant with many leaves, growing in dense stands
- Hollow, woody stalk, 2-3 cm in diameter, regular distances between leaf nodes, appearance similar to bamboo
- Fibrous taproots, rhizomes near the soil surface
- Alternating leaves, parallel but on opposite sides, deciduous but long lasting, blue-green in colour, ribbon-like and flat with rough edges 2-8 cm in width, very short ligules with long hairs
- Flowers arranged in erect panicles, oblong-thyrse shaped, pinkish-white in colour, on the upper section of the stalk, 30 to 70 cm long
- Fruit arranged in ears of two to five flowers, often three, approximately 12 mm long

Ecology and reproduction

- The plant flowers from September to October
- For optimal growth, the plant requires direct light and high temperatures
- Preferred habitats include wetlands, reed beds, riparian zones, ditches, roadsides, idle land, sandy soil along coasts. This very rustic plant can grow in poor soil and disturbed areas
- Exclusively asexual multiplication via the stalk and the rhizomes. High percentage of new sprouts from cuttings and rhizome fragments

Documentation

- Fried G., 2012. Guide des plantes invasives. Belin, Paris, 272 pp.
- N.Mauric. *Arundo donax* - Canne de Provence, 2000.
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- Concept.Cours.d'EAU. *Arundo donax*, 2013.
Available on-line at:
http://cceau.fr/invasions_biologiques/plantes_invasives/arundo_donax/
- INPN. *Arundo donax*, L., 1753.
Available on-line at:
https://inpn.mnhn.fr/espece/cd_nom/84173

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Classification

Order	Poales
Family	Poaceae
Genus	<i>Arundo</i>
Species	<i>Arundo donax</i> (L. 1753)

