

Phalaris arundinacea,
Reed Canarygrass

This grass is native to North America and Eurasia, often being planted in the US for erosion control. This plant has a root system that produces extensive rhizomes. It spreads quickly, forming dense colonies that can overgrow other plants. It often inhabits wetland areas.

Description: Reed Canarygrass can grow up to 5 feet tall, leaf blades being 10 inches long. These leaf blades are green/grayish-blue, linear in shape, and have a rough texture. The highly transparent ligule on reed canary grass is helpful in distinguishing it.

Control: Timing is very important for controlling this species as if it is cut during the growing season, a second growth spurt occurs in the fall. Consecutive annual burns in the spring or fall, or mowing mid-June and October may work to reduce growth and promote native species. Chemical methods may also be used, with fall application being more effective.

Look-alikes: The Reed Canarygrass is easily confused with another canary grass of the same genus, Canary Grass (*Phalaris canariensis*). This species is shorter and less aggressive than the Reed Canarygrass. Reed canary grass also resembles non-native orchard grass (*Dactylis glomerata*), but can be distinguished by its wider blades and narrower, more pointed inflorescence.

Flower Time: The clump of the Reed Canarygrass terminates in a skinny cluster of spikelets, reaching up to 10 inches long and 2-3 inches around. These spikelets change from a light green to a golden tan color over time.

