

Weed of the month

Reed Canary Grass (*Phalaris arundinacea*)

Reed Canary Grass (*Phalaris arundinacea*) is a non-native invasive, cool season grass, with large flat blades and densely clustered single seed heads that look similar to Karl Foerster grass (non-invasive cultivar). Reed Canary Grass grows from four feet to six feet tall. This time of year



is a good time to identify this cool season invasive grass because it is still green and active, while many other native species have gone dormant. This invasive spreads rapidly by an expanding rhizomatous root system, as well as

producing large amounts of seed while able to withstand intensive mowing and grazing. It is native to Eurasia, and was planted extensively in the U.S. since the 1800s as a grazing vegetation that could grow well in wet areas. Reed Canary Grass grows most commonly in wetlands and along stream and lake shores, quickly outcompeting native vegetation.

Control methods for Reed Canary Grass:

- **Hand-digging of small populations.**
- **Herbicide application.** This is best done in early spring or late fall when other native vegetation is dormant. Wicking (applying chemical directly to the plant by painting or sponging onto the plant) is a safer method than applying herbicide via spray, as this can drift into water bodies. **A certified applicator's license is required, as well as approval from the MN Department of Natural Resources when applying herbicide in or near a water body.**

For more information: [Minnesota Department of Natural Resources](#) or contact Krista Spreiter, Natural Resources Technician at 651-255-1123 or by email KSpreiter@mendotaheightsmn.gov.

Photo courtesy of the MN Department of Natural Resources.