

What you should know about Phragmites!

Phragmites australis is an invasive, non-native reed grass that has established itself in and around the Township of Strong.

Phragmites may be on your shoreline property and if so, you will want to remove it quickly. With a property owner's help and permission, the Phragmites Working Group Lake Bernard may be able to show you what it is and help you remove it, beginning with cutting it from your property or at least removing the seed head this fall. Raspberry Cane Cutters can be loaned to assist with the removal on your property.

To purchase your own cutters please visit:

<https://www.leevalley.com/en-ca/shop/garden/garden-care/pruners/10242-raspberry-cane-cutter?item=ED725>

Information about Phragmites has been posted on the following sites:

The Near North Enviro-Education Centre (NNEEC) <https://www.nneec.ca/>

Invasive Phragmites Control Centre <https://www.phragcontrol.com/>

Georgian Bay Forever <https://georgianbayforever.org/invasive-phragmites/>

Ontario Invasive Plant Council <https://www.ontarioinvasiveplants.ca/>

Ontario's Invading Species Awareness Program <http://www.invadingspecies.com/>

The Phragmites Working Group Lake Bernard has been locating and removing stands of Phragmites along the shoreline for six seasons. In some instances, it has grown over 15 feet tall. Phragmites root mats spread up to 10 feet in a season and can be up to four feet thick, sending rhizomes (runners) up to 60 feet long, choking out other plant species such as cattails and preventing the free flow of water and streams. According to wetland biologists and invasive species experts, Phragmites do not serve as a food source for wildlife, and it is too dense to serve as an effective cover or nesting grounds. It is deeply destructive to our recreational fishing as well as our local bird and other wildlife habitat.

If it goes unchecked, it will cause property owners' shorelines to fill in and natural plants to disappear and the loss of biodiversity will cause additional stress to the natural ecosystem around the lake. It is currently being removed from Lake Bernard by the Phragmites Working Group Lake Bernard

Stands of Phragmites spread to other areas which is why we must identify where it is currently established and also ask if property owners need assistance with the removal of stands. It can take several years to remove, with the expected cutting or spading time being

What you should know about Phragmites!

repeated year after year. By working together, the Phragmites Working Group Lake Bernard has had some areas under control in four years.

HERE IS WHAT YOU CAN DO:

- Educate yourself and your neighbours about Phragmites
- Identify the plant if it exists on your property and let the Phragmites Working Group Lake Bernard know
- Give the Phragmites Working Group Lake Bernard permission to assess/cut/remove invasive Phragmites on your property according to best practices if you are unable to do it yourself with help from friends or family and properly dispose of it to prevent further spread.

For further information on the Phragmites volunteer program under the Near North Enviro Education Centre (NNEEC) please contact: <https://www.nneec.ca/phragmites>

We hope you will consider joining this effort to ensure the health of our Lakes, and wildlife, and maintain property and recreational values for future generations!

Please call or email if you need help removing Phragmites from your shoreline
Chair Marilee Koenderink - Phragmites Working Group Lake Bernard

Marilee.koenderink@gmail.com

(705) 774-3878



What you should know about Phragmites!

Cutting To Drown Invasive Phragmites



Tips for Cutting to Drown Phragmites

- » This method entails cutting the Phragmites stalk as close to the sediment as possible
- » The deeper the water, the greater the chance of starving the belowground structures of oxygen and drowning the plant
- » For sparse Phragmites, one of the handiest tools to use is a raspberry cane cutter sold by Lee Valley; made of lightweight aluminum it will not rust, can telescope from 30" to 46", and the blade can be sharpened or easily replaced
- » This tool allows for selective harvesting of invasive Phragmites when growing among native plants
- » Hold the plant with one hand and with the other place the hooked blade against the stalk below the lowest leaf, slide the blade down the stalk until it reaches the bottom, then give it a gentle tug toward you to sever the stalk
- » Be sure to remove all of the cut material from the water as it may re-sprout causing further spread; ice fishing sleds, canoes, kayaks, row boats, barges etc. are useful for collecting and transporting the cut material to dry land
- » Do not compost unless the area is contained and new shoots can be destroyed; if dried plants cannot be burned, burial to a depth of 1 m or storage in plastic bags until rotten are viable options
- » If seeds are present, pull plant over, place seed head inside a plastic bag and sever using pruners prior to cutting the stalk; dispose of seeds when rotten

Partners in advocating responsible invasive Phragmites control:



What you should know about Phragmites!

Tips for Effective Phragmites Spading

- » Spading can be used on dry land or in water
- » Spading can occur several times during the growing season as new shoots arise
- » If spading can only occur once, the best time to cut is when the plant reaches peak height, when the seed head is emerging, as this depletes more stored nutrients and energy in the belowground structures
- » Do not try to dig out the plants as this will stimulate more growth
- » Proper disposal of cut plants will reduce spread; do not compost unless the area is contained and new shoots can be destroyed; if dried plants cannot be burned, burial to a depth of 1 m or storage in plastic bags until rotten are viable options.
- » If seeds are present, pull plant over, place seed head into a plastic bag and cut from the stalk using pruners prior to spading; dispose of seeds when rotten

Partners in advocating responsible invasive Phragmites control:



Spading Method to Remove Invasive Phragmites

