

# The Urrbrae Wetland

## Indigenous Plant Trail

The Urrbrae wetland indigenous plant trail consists of a number of provenance plants that were used by Aboriginal People for food, medicine, fiber and tools.

Each of these plants is marked with a small sign, containing information about the traditional uses and cultural importance of the plant.

*Kurana people have been consulted throughout this project, however the majority of information printed here and on the signs is from published resources.*

**Do NOT pick or remove any plant material.**

## Education @ the wetland

Groups are welcome to take a self-guided tour of the Indigenous Plant Trail. An activity booklet is provided, that encourages students observe, record and analyse the types of local plants that assisted the Aboriginal people to live successfully and sustainably for 1000'S of years.

To plan your visit, please contact the Wetland Manager or visit the Urrbrae Wetland Website [www.urrbraewetlandlc.org](http://www.urrbraewetlandlc.org)



# Common Reed

## Phragmites australis

**Description:** *Phragmites australis* is a wide spread reed that grows 1-3m tall. It has round stems and broad, flat leaves, which arise all the way up the stem before coming to a point. The strap like leaves can be 50cm long.

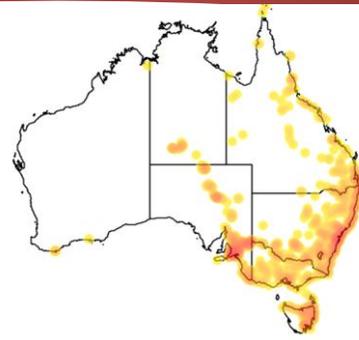
This plant develops flowering heads which are droopy and feathery at the top. The seeds are very small and resemble chaff.

**Other Information:** Although this species can be invasive, it provides excellent bank stability, prevents erosion and acts as a filter to the flowing water, removing sediments, salts, phosphates and nitrates. It also provides excellent nesting sites for water birds.

**Aboriginal Uses:** The tubers (roots) were steamed and eaten or roasted and pounded into flour, while the young shoots and leaf tips were eaten raw. As the young growth was more desirable, reed beds were commonly burnt to generate regrowth.

The long, mature stems were used to make baskets & bags or collected, layered and bound together to make light rafts. Spears could also be made from the mature stems, which were tipped with a hard point and could be thrown 100m.

Stems were also cut into segments to make ornaments like necklaces, hair beads or nose ornaments.



Distribution Map [1]



Summer



Winter



Seed Heads



Tubers (roots)

## References

[1] Atlas of Living Australia., *Phragmites australis* (Cav.) Trin. ex Steud, <http://bie.ala.org.au/species/urn:lsid:biodiversity.org.au:apni:taxon:348219>

Bagust, P & Tout-Smith, L (2010) 'The Native Plants of Adelaide: Returning the vanishing natural heritage of the Adelaide plains to your garden', Government of South Australia's Department for Environment and Heritage, South Australia.

'The Kuarna Seasonal Trail Excursion' (1985) Aboriginal Community College Inc

Urrbrae Wetland does not guarantee, and accepts no legal liability whatsoever arising from or connected to, the use of or reliance on any material contained on this fact sheet or on any linked site.

Do not pick or eat native plants as removal of plant material as some plants contain poisonous substances.

## Contact

**Wetland Manager**

**Ph/Fax:** (08) 8272 6010

**Mobile:** 0403 447 064

**Email:** [wetlands@urrbraehs.sa.edu.au](mailto:wetlands@urrbraehs.sa.edu.au)

**Website:** [www.urrbraewetlandlc.org](http://www.urrbraewetlandlc.org)