

# Spading Method to Remove Invasive Phragmites



For more spading information please contact:  
Professor Lynn Short, Humber College, [lynn.short@humber.ca](mailto:lynn.short@humber.ca)

# 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:



For more information about invasive Phragmites control please visit:

[www.opwg.ca](http://www.opwg.ca)

# Cutting to Drown Invasive Phragmites



Special thanks to Greg Lisson and Leslie Wood (Oliphant Fishing Islands Phragmites Community Group) and Donna Stewart (South Bruce Peninsula Phragmites Group) for demonstrating the raspberry cane cutting method.

# 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, a raspberry cane cutter sold by Lee Valley, can selectively harvest Phragmites when growing among native plants; this tool is made of lightweight aluminum that will not rust, can telescope from 30" to 46", and the blade can be sharpened or easily replaced
- » Hold the plant with one hand and with the other place the cane cutters 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:



For more information about invasive Phragmites control please visit:

[www.opwg.ca](http://www.opwg.ca)