

## 6.4 Marshes

### *Phragmites australis* Semipermanently Flooded Ruderal Herbaceous Vegetation (Eastern Reed Marsh)

COMMON NAME	Common Reed Semipermanently Flooded Ruderal Herbaceous Vegetation
SYNONYM	<i>Eastern Reed Marsh</i>
PHYSIOGNOMIC CLASS	Herbaceous Vegetation (V)
PHYSIOGNOMIC SUBCLASS	Perennial graminoid vegetation (V.A)
PHYSIOGNOMIC GROUP	Temperate or subpolar grassland (V.A.5)
PHYSIOGNOMIC SUBGROUP	Natural/Semi-natural (V.A.5.N)
FORMATION	Semipermanently flooded temperate or subpolar grassland (V.A.5.N.1)
ALLIANCE	PHRAGMITES AUSTRALIS SEMIPERMANENTLY FLOODED HERBACEOUS ALLIANCE

CLASSIFICATION CONFIDENCE LEVEL

USFWS WETLAND SYSTEM PALUSTRINE

RANGE

#### ***Voyageurs National Park***

This type is restricted to shorelines of the large lakes and islands in the park.

#### ***Globally***

This association is widespread throughout the eastern United States.

ENVIRONMENTAL DESCRIPTION

#### ***Voyageurs National Park***

Stands occur on large lakes, most often on fairly wave exposed sites on sand bars or shallow areas adjacent to islands. The substrate is typically sand or, in some cases, clay or peat over clay. The density of *Phragmites australis* tends to be inversely related to water depth with the deeper stands having as much as 60% open water. Most sites contain 0.25 - 1 m standing water. The water regime is permanently flooded to intermittently exposed.

#### ***Globally***

Stands are found in semipermanently flooded marshes, ditches, impoundments, and other disturbed aquatic systems, as well as lake shorelines.

MOST ABUNDANT SPECIES

#### ***Voyageurs National Park***

##### Stratum

Graminoid

##### Species

*Phragmites australis*

#### ***Globally***

##### Stratum

Graminoid

##### Species

*Phragmites australis*

CHARACTERISTIC SPECIES

#### ***Voyageurs National Park***

*Phragmites australis*

#### ***Globally***

*Phragmites australis*

VEGETATION DESCRIPTION

#### ***Voyageurs National Park***

The Reed Marsh community is composed primarily, and sometimes solely, by one species: *Phragmites australis*. The density of *Phragmites australis* in the Reed Marsh is highly variable. In deep water (1-1.5 m deep), it can be as low as 40% whereas in shallow water (0-1 m) it is commonly 100%. The Reed Marsh Community typically consists of very few species. In most cases one or more of the following species may be present at low (0-15%) cover:

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**Voyageurs National Park**

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*Polygonum lapathifolium*, *Polygonum punctatum*, *Typha* spp., *Acorus calamus*, *Calamagrostis canadensis*, *Carex rostrata*, *Scirpus acutus*, and/or *Scirpus tabernaemontani*. In addition, a wide variety of submerged aquatic plants (see Midwest Pondweed Submerged Aquatic Wetland) may be found if the site has standing water. These submerged aquatics often float in from other areas but are rarely found rooted within the Reed Marsh community because of the high wave energy.

**Globally**

This community is composed primarily, and sometimes solely, by one species: *Phragmites australis*. The density of *Phragmites australis* is highly variable: in deep water (1-1.5 m deep), it can be as low as 40% whereas in shallow water (0-1 m) it is commonly 100%. Typically, few other species are present. In Northern Minnesota, one or more of the following species may be present at low (0-15%) cover: *Polygonum lapathifolium*, *Polygonum punctatum*, *Typha* spp., *Acorus calamus*, *Calamagrostis canadensis*, *Carex rostrata*, *Scirpus acutus*, and/or *Scirpus tabernaemontani*. In addition, a wide variety of submerged aquatic plants may be found if the site has standing water. These submerged aquatics often float in from other areas but are rarely found rooted within this community (M. Smith personal communication 1999).

CONSERVATION RANK GW.

DATABASE CODE CEGL004141

COMMENTS

**Voyageurs National Park**

Diagnostic features of the type include the herbaceous community dominated solely by *Phragmites australis*. This type is analogous to Ontario's W8 (Harris *et al.* 1996).

*Phragmites australis* is a cryptogenic species which has become somewhat invasive in wetlands further south. Its presence in Voyageurs seems to be limited to relatively small stands in flooded areas of the large lakes.

REFERENCES

- Harris, A. G., S. C. McMurray, P. W. C. Uhlig, J. K. Jeglum, R. F. Foster, and G. D. Racey. 1996. Field guide to the wetland ecosystem classification for northwestern Ontario. Ont. Minist. Nat. Resour., Northwest Sci. Tech. Field Guide FG-01. Thunder Bay, Ont. 74 p.
- Nelson, J. B. 1986. The natural communities of South Carolina: Initial classification and description. S. C. Wildl. Mar. Resour. Dep., Div. Wildl. Freshwater Fish. Columbia, S. C. 55 p.
- Schafale, M. P., and A. S. Weakley. 1990. Classification of the natural communities of North Carolina. Third approximation. N.C. Dep. Environ., Health, Nat. Resour., Div. Parks and Recreation, Nat. Heritage Prog. Raleigh. 325 p.

**Note:**

This association is found in three different map classes:

- 1) [Eastern Reed Marsh](#)
- 2) [Deep Marsh Mosaic / Complex](#)
- 3) [Wet Meadow / Fen Mosaic / Complex](#)