

American Bur-reed | *Sparganium americanum*



Close-up of flowering
American bur-reed stems.



The spherical, bur-like structure
of American bur-reed.



Dry bur-like structures of American bur-reed.

American bur-reed is a perennial plant native to the eastern half of the United States. Leaves are bright green, long, strap-like, and up to 1 inch wide.

Flowers are up to 1 inch in diameter, formed from a **spherical bur-like structure** that starts off green and becomes brown. Flowers are found in loose clusters. The seeds are dry with one seed per flower structure, which does not open to release the seed.

The overall plant stands upright and can be up to 2 feet tall. It grows in calm, shallow waters with partial shade. This plant can form dense stands along shallow shorelines.

Management Value

This plant rarely causes problems in recreational ponds and is an important food source for many marsh bird species, including waterfowl. Muskrats can eat the entire plant. The flowers attract many species of insects, including butterflies and other native pollinators.

The plant can provide shallow water habitat for juvenile fish and invertebrates, which are eaten by larger fish.

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Recommended Controls

Herbicide efficacy is not listed for American bur-reed, but the following have been most successful in controlling this species.

Option 1: Diquat (3.73-pound formulation). Diquat (0.25 gallon per acre-foot of water) should be applied as a submersed injection (application using a wand or hose). Determine pond volume prior to application. Do not exceed annual herbicide rate limits as stated on the product label.

NOTE: Acre foot = average depth of pond multiplied by pond acreage; average depth is calculated by taking the depth at 20 points across a water body and averaging the values.

■ **Read and follow all chemical label instructions, especially the section on the use of personal protection equipment.**

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