

# NEYRAUDIA REYNAUDIANA (KUNTH) KENG EX HITCHC.

Poaceae (Gramineae)/Grass Family

**Common Names:** Silk reed, Burma reed, cane grass  
**Synonymy:** None (*N. arundinacea* (L.) Henr. misapplied)  
**Origin:** South Asia

**Botanical Description:** Robust, reed-like perennial to 3 m (10 ft) tall, forming clumps from short, coarse rhizomes. Stems often branched and filled with soft pith. Leaf sheaths 10-25 cm (4-10 in) long, smooth, shining, clasping, woolly at the top with a line of collar hairs and ligule of hairs. Leaf blades linear, flat or involute, 20-100 cm (8-39 in) long and 8-25 mm (0.3-1 in) wide, glabrous below, sparsely short-hairy above, with margins smooth or rough and midvein inconspicuous; blades often deciduous from sheaths. Inflorescence a large, feathery, silver-hairy terminal panicle, 30-60 cm (12-24 in) long, densely and finely branched, nodding. Spikelets 6-8 mm (0.2-0.3 in) long, 4- to 8-flowered, with lemmas long-hairy and slender-awned (awns often curved).

**NOTE:** May be confused with the common reed, *Phragmites australis* (Cav.) Trin. ex Steud., but its rhizomes long, often forming leafy stolons; its leaf sheaths without a hairy collar; and its spikelets without awns.

**Ecological Significance:** Introduced by USDA to its Plant Introduction Station in Coconut Grove in 1916 (Gordon and Thomas 1997). Reported as escaping in southeastern Florida by several authors (Hitchcock and Chase 1951, Ward 1968, Bailey and Bailey 1976, Morton 1976, Austin 1978, Hall 1978). By 1990, documented as a serious pest in Dade County and as naturalized in Collier County (Guala 1990). Able to colonize marginal and undisturbed habitats once established in an area (Guala 1990). Now well established in the globally rare pine rockland habitats of Dade County and viewed as a threat to rare species there, especially since its high flammability promotes frequent fires, enhancing its spread (Schmitz *et al.* 1997). By 1993, established in nearly 75% of Dade County pine rocklands outside Everglades National Park, with high mortality of the native south Florida slash pine (*Pinus elliottii* var. *densa*) linked to fires involving this grass (Maguire 1993). In its native range, reported to grow gregariously by roadsides and in old clearings, bogs, and agricultural fields, often on infertile and rocky soils (Lazarides 1980).



Hairs at sheath/blade joint

**Distribution:** Occurs in a wide variety of habitats to 2,000 m (6,500 ft) in elevation in its native range (Bor 1960, Lazarides 1980). Reported as introduced in the Bahamas (Correll and Correll 1982). In Florida, currently found in Collier, Monroe (including the Florida Keys), Dade, Broward, and Palm Beach counties (Schmitz 1994, Wunderlin *et al.* 1996), and possibly in Highlands County, where it was once cultivated (Guala 1990). Has been cultivated as far north as southern Georgia (Schmitz *et al.* 1997, Guala 1990).

**Life History:** Tolerant of a wide range of soil, light, and water regimes, including marshy areas, but appears to prefer open, sunny, dry sites, usually disturbed ones (Guala 1990). Aerial stems usually killed by freezing temperatures, but observed to vigorously resprout from rhizomes after hard frosts (Guala 1990). Flowers nearly year-round, seeds dispersed by wind.

KAL



**In natural area, Miami-Dade County**

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**Panicles**