

Golden Bamboo

Phyllostachys aurea (Carr) Poaceae

INTRODUCTION

Phyllostachys aurea, or Golden bamboo, is native to Southeast China and is a member of the grass family. In 1882, Golden Bamboo was introduced into the United States, specifically Alabama. Grown for its screening abilities, golden bamboo provides visual as well as noise barriers. Golden Bamboo is fast growing and can quickly colonize an area if not contained. This plant is available for sale from online distributors and in garden centers or nurseries for use in the landscape. Spread of Golden Bamboo has occurred across the Southeastern United States from Maryland to Florida, Louisiana to Arkansas and Oregon. Florida's Exotic Pest Plant Council has listed *Phyllostachys aurea* as a Category II invasive.

DESCRIPTION

Phyllostachys aurea is one of the most common bamboos in the United States. The plant can reach a height of 30 feet, potentially over 40 feet in the south. Culms (stems) are typically green, but will turn yellow when exposed to sunlight. Short swollen internodes at the base of the culms are a characteristic used to distinguish Golden bamboo from other bamboos. The leaves are lanceolate in shape, roughly 15 cm long and 1 to 2 cm wide. Golden bamboo flowers infrequently and may not flower for several decades. *P. aurea* spreads by rhizomes and culms grow from side shoots at alternate nodes of the rhizome.

IMPACTS

This bamboo is fast growing and will quickly spread via underground rhizomes. Despite containment efforts, the rhizomes of Golden bamboo will often find their way out of confinement to infest nearby areas. Golden bamboo will grow in sparsely wooded secondary forests, and does best in full sun. *P. aurea* will continue to grow and spread in less than desirable environments.

MANAGEMENT

Preventative: The first step in preventative control of golden bamboo is to limit planting and removal of existing plants within the landscape. Care must be exercised to prevent seed spread and dispersal during the removal process.

Cultural: Inform the public to refrain from purchasing, propagating, or planting golden bamboo due to its ability to escape into natural areas.

Mechanical: Cutting and mowing can be used on small infestations or where herbicides cannot be used. Cut plants as close to the ground as possible. Repeat several times throughout the growing season as plants resprout. Monitoring and re-treatment will be necessary for several growing seasons until the energy reserves in the rhizomes are exhausted.

Biological: There are no known biological control programs for golden bamboo.

Chemical:

Foliar Spray Method: This method should be considered for large areas of bamboo where risk to non-target species is minimal. Foliar applications are most effective if canes are cut and herbicides applied to newly expanded leaves. Air temperature should be above 65°F to ensure absorption of herbicides. Glyphosate can be applied at a 5% solution in enough water to thoroughly wet all leaves. Use a low pressure and coarse spray pattern to reduce spray drift damage to non-target species. Imazapyr can be applied at a 1% solution and more effective than glyphosate. Glyphosate and imazapyr are non-selective systemic herbicides that may kill non-target, partially sprayed plants. Also, imazapyr should not be sprayed if desirable trees are nearby.

REFERENCES AND USEFUL LINKS:

Floridata Homepage: <http://www.floridata.com>

University of Florida Center for Aquatic and Invasive Plants:
<http://aquat1.ifas.ufl.edu/welcome.html>

University of Florida's Cooperative Extension Electronic Data Information Source:
<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/index.html>

Langeland, K.A. and K. Craddock Burks. 1998. Identification and Biology of Non-Native Plants in Florida's Natural Areas. IFAS Publication SP 257. University of Florida, Gainesville. 165 pp.

The Plant Conservation Alliance's Alien Plant Working Group. Weeds Gone Wild: Alien Plant Invaders of Natural Areas: <http://www.nps.gov/plants/alien/index.htm>

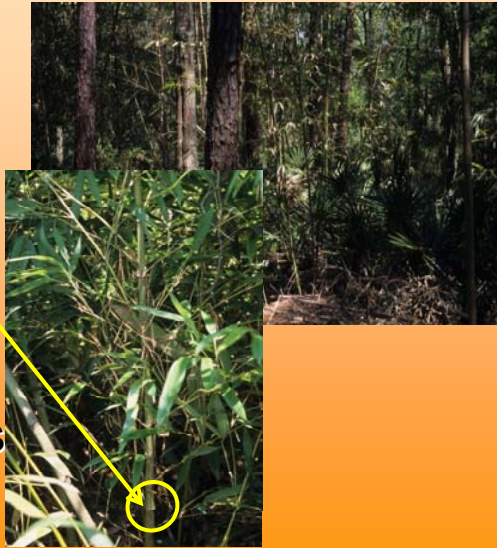
Pacific Island Ecosystems at Risk (PIER). Plant Threats to Pacific Ecosystems: <http://www.hear.org/pier/threats.htm>

Invasive Plants of the Eastern United States: <http://www.invasive.org>

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. Plants Database: <http://plants.usda.gov>

Mature Plant

- Can grow up to 30 feet in height
- Green to yellow stems, swollen internodes at base
- Rhizomes arise from side shoots



Leaves

- Leaves are lanceolate
 - Roughly 15 cm long
 - 1 to 2 cm wide
- Flowers infrequently, may be several decades before flowering occurs

