

Bamboo Thugs

Bamboo is one of the fastest growing and most invasive plants in the world. The truth of the matter is that bamboo does not belong in the United States. It is an invasive species brought over from China in the late 1800's. This aggressive plant poses a major ecological risk by growing uncontrolled in non-natural environments, outcompeting native species and causing significant property damage.

Bamboo is actually a perennial grass with hollow circular stems (called culms) and may grow to 80 feet tall. This aggressive plant spreads mainly through the roots and rhizomes. The rhizomes spread aggressively underneath the ground's surface despite how much top cutting is done to try to prevent the spreading. Bamboo grows "up" (vertical growth) in the spring and "out" (horizontal spread) in the summer and fall. It takes over a relatively large area of land in a very short period of time. Bamboo also contributes to mosquito populations by providing a place for mosquitoes to lay their eggs in the water that collects in the hollow stalks.

In a few short years newly planted bamboo will create a maintenance nightmare. It is so aggressive, bamboo will grow through blacktop and cause driveways and roads to buckle as the strong rhizomes grow underneath. If bamboo hits a barrier, the rhizomes will look for any available opening including going underneath the barrier and pushing through from the bottom or crossing to the other side.

Bamboo is responsible for significant damage to both the environment and to public and private property.