
芦竹属 lu zhu shu

Perennials, usually tall reeds, rhizomatous. Culms usually robust, rarely rather slender, hollow. Leaf blades cauline, broadly linear, tough, flat, base rounded or cordate; ligule membranous with minutely ciliolate margin. Inflorescence a large, copiously branched, plumose panicle of numerous spikelets. Spikelets wedge-shaped, laterally compressed, florets 2–5, disarticulating above glumes and between florets; rachilla internodes glabrous; lemmas narrow, membranous, rounded on back, 3–7-veined, plumose below middle with spreading silky-white hairs, tapering to an entire or bidentate apex tipped by a straight awnlet; palea 1/2–2/3 length of lemma body, keels glabrous or shortly ciliate. **x = 12.**

Three species: Mediterranean region to China; two species in China.

1a. Culms 2–6 m tall; lemmas 8–11 mm, hairs 5–6 mm
1b. Culms 0.6–1.2 m tall; lemmas 3.5–6 mm, hairs 1.5–3 mm


芦竹 lu zhu

_Aira bengalensis_ (Retzius) J. F. Gmelin; _Amphidonax bengalensis_ (Retzius) Nees ex Steudel (1854), not Roxburgh ex Nees (1836); _Arundo bengalensis_ Retzius; _A. coleotricha_ (Hackel) Honda; _A. donax_ var. _coleotricha_ Hackel; _Donax arundinaceus_ P. Beauv.; _D. bengalensis_ (Retzius) P. Beauv.; _Scolochloa donax_ (Linnaeus) Gaudin.

Robust reed from a thick knotty rhizome. Culms very stout, erect, 2–6 m tall, 1–1.5 cm in diam., unbranched or with bamboolike clusters of slender branches from nodes. Leaf sheaths longer than internodes, usually glabrous except long pilose at mouth; leaf blades 30–60 × 2–5 cm, margins scabrous, tapering to a slender filiform apex; ligule 0.7–1.5 mm. Panicle 30–60 cm, dense, usually purplish; branches 10–25 cm, ascending. Spikelets 10–15 mm, florets 2–5; glumes narrowly lanceolate, 8–12 mm, 3–5-veined, lower glume acute, upper glume sharply acuminate; lemmas linear-lanceolate, 8–11 mm, 3–7-veined, dorsal hairs 5–6 mm, apex minutely bidentate with 1–2 mm awnlet from sinus, lateral veins also shortly extended; palea 1/2 length of lemma body. Fl. and fr. Oct–Dec.

River banks and other damp places, but it will also grow when planted in dryish habitats. Fujian, Guangdong, Guizhou, Hunan, Jiangsu, Sichuan, Xizang, Yunnan, Zhejiang [Afghanistan, Bhutan, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Japan, Kazakhstan, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Thailand, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Vietnam; N Africa, C and SW Asia, S Europe; widely introduced elsewhere].

Forms with variegated leaf blades are sometimes cultivated in gardens, e.g., var. _versicolor_ (Miller) Stokes (_Arundo versicolor_ Miller), with longitudinally green- and white-striped leaf blades. _Arundo donax_ var. _coleotricha_ refers to a wild variant with pubescent leaf sheaths.

The culms have many uses, including light construction, basket making, matting, musical pipes, and ornaments.


台灣芦竹 tai wan lu zhu

_Arundo formosana_ var. _gracilis_ Hackel; _A. formosana_ var. _robusta_ Conert; _A. parviflora_ Ohwi.

Tufted perennial from a short rhizome. Culms relatively slender, suberect to pendant, 0.6–1.2 m tall, 2–6 mm in diam., with slender clusters of branches from nodes. Leaf sheaths longer than internodes, glabrous; leaf blades 10–25 × 0.5–1.5 cm, margins scabrous, basal part with long silky hairs, apex acuminate; ligule 0.5–1 mm. Panicle 10–30 cm, loosely contracted, light brownish; branches 5–8 cm, ascending. Spikelets 6–10 mm, florets 2–5, uppermost floret much reduced; glumes 3–4 mm, 3-veined, lower glume lanceolate-elliptic, acuminate, upper glume lanceolate, acuminate; lemmas narrowly lanceolate, 3.5–6 mm, 5-veined, dorsal hairs 1.5–3 mm, apex subentire to minutely bidentate with 1.5–3 mm awn from sinus, lateral veins shortly extended or not; palea 2/3 length of lemma body. Fl. and fr. Jun–Dec.

Dry coastal grassland and sea cliffs. Taiwan [Japan (Iriomote Island in S Ryukyu Islands), Philippines].

The culms are used for basket making.