



## Invasive Species of the Month for January 2019

### Yellow Groove Bamboo (*Phyllostachys aureosulcata*)

**Origin:** China

**Introduction:** First introduced for an agricultural uses trial in 1908

**Interesting Fact:** Yellow Groove Bamboo is the most common running bamboo species in our area, and most other similar *Phyllostachys* species are exotic, if not invasive. The only native species it could be confused with would be Giant Cane (*Arundinaria gigantea*), which does not normally get as tall and normally has only one lateral branch per node.

**Description:** Yellow Groove Bamboo (hereafter YGB) is an invasive, woody grass species that is cold hardy to -15° F. YGB can grow up to around 45 ft. tall and has alternate, evergreen leaves as well as a yellow groove on the internodes.

#### Defining characteristics:

- Yellow groove (sulcus) on most of the internodes, which fades with age
- Slight rough surface on newer internodes
- Can have 2-3 lateral branches per node on the mid stems
- Straight to zig zag growth of culm

#### Botanical Terminology:

*Culm* – the main stem

*Internode* – the portion of the stem between nodes

*Rhizomes* –horizontal underground stems that are storage structures and can produce new shoots

*Sulcus* – the groove on the internode sections



Images from Left to Right: The yellow groove or sulcus of YGB, highlighted with the red arrows (Caryn Rickel, Institute of Invasive Bamboo Research, Bugwood.org), the evergreen foliage of YGB, and a closeup of the sulcus on a young stem.





## Knox County Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area

**Habitat:** Urban areas, landscaping, roadsides, woodland edges, riparian areas, disturbed areas, etc.



Above Image: A dense patch of Yellow Groove Bamboo along a roadside in Clay County.

**Ecological threat:** YGB rarely produces flowers, so seed dispersal is not a concern with spread. However, YGB has extensive rhizomes, allowing it to create dense stands. Rhizomes can be fragmented, and these fragments can be transported by waterways to create new populations. In addition to its dense growth, YGB can grow to heights of 45 ft., which prevent native plant regeneration.

### **Control Methods:**

- **Prevention:** Do not plant Yellow Groove Bamboo. If you want a vegetative screen, try a native species alternative.
- **Manual:** Small individuals can be pulled/grubbed out. Large infestations would require extensive digging to 24-30 in. in depth depending on the maturity of the rhizomes. Rigorous mowing (like you would a lawn) can exhaust rhizomes, if continued for several growing seasons.
- **Chemical:** A foliar applications of glyphosate\* and imazapyr\* can be effective. An addition of a nonionic surfactant could increase efficacy, but do not use surfactant if applying near a water body. Treatment works best when the culms are cut back to the ground and regrowth treated when around 3 ft. tall. Most mature stands of YGB will require several years of herbicide treatments.

\*Always follow herbicide label instructions.



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