

Sparganium americanum



American bur-reed

Family	Sparganiaceae		
Origin	Native		
WIS Code	OBL	CoC	6

DESCRIPTION

Recognized by its stalk of large spherical bur-like flower clusters, this perennial has an erect stem with long linear, slightly keeled (ribbed) flat leaves (to 1 m tall).

FLOWERS AND FRUITS

June through September. Flower stalks are thick with slightly zig-zag branching. Flowers are clustered in round heads near the top of the stalk, heads are green becoming brown and bur-like as seeds ripen. Female flower heads (1.5 to 2.5 cm) arise from axils of leaf-like bracts on the stem. The flowers have only one stigma, and fruit is an achene (4-5 mm) that tapers both to the base and tip.

HABITAT

Muddy shores of ponds, swamps, floodplain depressions and low river and stream banks.

SIMILAR SPECIES

Sparganium eurycarpum, giant bur-reed, differs in its thick stout stems (to 2.5 m tall), strongly keeled leaves, larger flowering heads (3 to 4 cm), and two stigmas per female flower. Also its achenes are larger (6 to 10 mm) and wedge-shaped, being broader near the tip than those of *S. americanum*. See the *S. eurycarpum* page for more details.



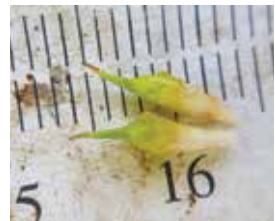
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