

## Bamboo: key points.

- There are hundreds of species and cultivars of bamboo.
- Bamboos can be classed as clumpers or runners based on how their rhizomes grow.
- Runners have ridges or grooves on the stem (culm). Clumpers are round.
- Bamboos are also classed as hardy or “tropical.” Tropical includes our climate zone in many cases.
- The genus *Bambusa* includes some of our best choices.
- The genus *Phyllostachys* includes most of the well-known runners.

## Running bamboo:

- Rhizomes of runners spread in the spring. Annual monitoring prevents problems.
- Rhizomes mostly spread at ground level.
- Running bamboo can be confined, but must be monitored.
- Removing bamboo is mostly labor. Herbicides have limited use.

## What bamboo wants:

- Loves water, tolerates moderate drought.
- Most take full sun or some shade. Thin-leaved species prefer afternoon shade here.
- Indifferent about soil type.
- Very responsive to nitrogen fertilizer.
- Some types get frost damage on foliage.

## Using bamboo in the landscape:

- Many become very large plants.
- There is some litter from leaf drop and culm sheaths.
- Appearance is improved by thinning every few years.
- Excellent for privacy and screening.
- Some types can be clipped as hedges.
- Very dramatic landscape plants due to size, silhouette, foliage patterns, seasonal change, lush appearance, soft green leaves.
- Can live many years in a container with sufficient water.
- Create their own microclimate, their own mulch, and provide wildlife habitat.

## Resources:

Redwood Barn Nursery web site: <http://redwoodbarn.com>

American Bamboo Society: <http://www.bamboo.org>

Bamboo forums and pictures: <http://bambooweb.info>