

# Findings from the Field

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Volume 5

Article 23

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2022

## Reed Canary Grass

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### Recommended Citation

N, Tyler (2022) "Reed Canary Grass," *Findings from the Field*: Vol. 5, Article 23.

Available at: <https://findings.gmri.org/journal/vol5/iss1/23>

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# Reed Canary Grass



[https://www.google.com/url?sa=i&url=https%3A%2F%2Fnaturalresources.extension.iastate.edu%2Fencyclopedia%2Freed-canary-grass-invasive-species-profiles&psig=AOvVaw1hog4oawOvVfe6OKCt9s7u&ust=1652375258205000&source=images&cd=vfe&ved=0CAwOjRxqFwoTCIjismOf31\\_cCFQAAAAAdAAAAABAJ](https://www.google.com/url?sa=i&url=https%3A%2F%2Fnaturalresources.extension.iastate.edu%2Fencyclopedia%2Freed-canary-grass-invasive-species-profiles&psig=AOvVaw1hog4oawOvVfe6OKCt9s7u&ust=1652375258205000&source=images&cd=vfe&ved=0CAwOjRxqFwoTCIjismOf31_cCFQAAAAAdAAAAABAJ)

On Friday October 29, it was a sunny and cold 54°F afternoon (11:28am. to be exact), at Pawtuckaway state park in Nottingham NewHampshire. I was looking at the view on top of the South Mountain when I realized this grass in front of me was growing on a rock. This grass was very weird because it was green on the bottom, yellow in the middle, and purple/red on top with little things coming out of the top. It was also weird that it was growing on a rock with barely any soil, this high up. I was interested because I had never seen grass growing on a rock. I was also very curious about the fact that it was yellow, purple/red, and green. It was SUPER high up still surviving. Even with all of the cold weather, wind, and rain. This made me think: How is the grass alive this high

up? Why is it growing on a rock? Why is its coloration so weird? Is it even grass? Does the weather have to do with its colors like when leaves turn a different color in the cold winter?



[https://www.google.com/url?sa=i&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.geograph.org.uk%2Fphoto%2F6521657&psig=A0vVaw1hog4oaw0vVfe6QKCT9s7u&ust=1652375258205000&source=images&cd=vfe&ved=0CAwQjRxqFwoTCJismOf31\\_cCFQAAAAAdAAAAABAQ](https://www.google.com/url?sa=i&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.geograph.org.uk%2Fphoto%2F6521657&psig=A0vVaw1hog4oaw0vVfe6QKCT9s7u&ust=1652375258205000&source=images&cd=vfe&ved=0CAwQjRxqFwoTCJismOf31_cCFQAAAAAdAAAAABAQ)

After a lot of research on grass that grows high up, and can grow on rocks that are green, yellow and red, I found that the grass I saw was Reed Canary Grass. Reed Canary grass only grows early spring and grows vertically for 5-7 weeks. It can grow in hard rocky soil, and is very invasive. Reed Canary grass can survive up to one year of flooding, especially if parts of the plant are not submerged. It can also survive in temperatures of 68°F, and 100°F. This means that a lot of rain won't kill the grass, and it can survive in cold conditions which fits a mountain setting perfectly. The reason that the grass was growing on the rock was because Reed Canary grass can survive in rocky hard soils, and the rock it was growing on had a little soil and was very rocky and hard. The reason that Reed Canary grass is green yellow and purple/red is because it is the different colors when the seed is maturing. Just like when a butterfly goes from a

chrysalis, to a caterpillar, and then to a butterfly. It is the cycle of the seed growing. It is first green when it starts, then it goes to purplish, and then it goes to a tannish yellow when it's done maturing.

There are many ways that the grass seeds could have gotten and grown on the rock. When Reed Grass is done maturing the seeds almost disperses immediately. The seeds fall downwards naturally by gravity, and have a buoyancy for a few days where the seed may get washed up somewhere. Or the seeds could have clung onto an animal, human, or machine and fallen onto the rock while they were sitting down.

With this information it brings up one big question. Why was there only a little patch of the grass on the rock? Was it because they have someone that comes up and clips the grass so it doesn't become too invasive. If it is invasive shouldn't it be spreading everywhere on the rock? Did it not spread because the roots can't go into the rock? Was it because you need a lot of seeds to have a lot of grass, and there was only one seed that fell? We could run an investigation by going to Pawtuckaway state park, asking around if they have someone go up to the mountain and trim it. If they don't then do further research into why it wasn't spreading around the rock and the rest of the area.

**Works cited page**

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