

# ***HORSE TAIL***

Equisetum hyemale

***AKA Scouring rush; A bamboo-like spreading, perennial***



**Description:** The evergreen stems are cylindrical, about 1/3 in (0.8 cm) in diameter, jointed, hollow, usually unbranched, and have rough longitudinal ridges. The tiny leaves are joined together around the stem, forming a narrow black-green band or sheath at each joint.

**Natural Habitat:** wet places, including pond margins, swamps, floodplains and ditches. It sometimes forms dense stands along bogs or marshes.

**Size:** 3 feet

**Growth Rate:** Moderate

**Light:** Full sun or filtered sun

**Planting and Care:** Scouring rush can tolerate prolonged wet conditions, but should not be totally submerged nor allowed to dry out.

**Landscape Usage:** Often grown in Japanese-style gardens, at the edge of ponds and in the margins of ornamental water gardens. It can be invasive if conditions are favorable, so, unless you want a large, spreading stand of it, it is advisable to maintain scouring rush in containers sunk in the ground with the lip just barely above ground level. However, a dense stand of scouring rush along the margin of an ornamental pool can be very attractive.

**Commercial/Traditional Uses:** used to scour cooking utensils, and is still harvested commercially in northern Mexico for polishing fine furniture. It was also called by old writers Shave-grass, and was formerly much used by whitesmiths and cabinet-makers.



**WARNING!** Contains large amounts of sharp silica crystal making it painful, if not actually life-threatening if ingested. It has been reported to sicken cattle.