



Cyperus papyrus

Family name: **Cyperaceae**Common name: **Cyperaceae**Local name: **(البردي) Al Burdi**

Wild



Role in Biodiversity

Papyrus swamps limit evaporation of water and regulate flooding risk during high rainfall season by forming floating islands that obstruct navigation and water flow. It is also acts as natural filter of sediment and pollutants and as shore stabilizers. It effectively removes N and P from wastewater and eutrophic pond water thus improve the drinking water quality. It uses the C4 photosynthetic pathway which help in CO2 balance in the ecosystem. *Cyperus papyrus* provides nesting, breeding, and feeding grounds for numerous species of mammals, birds, and fish.



Environment and Growing

Cyperus papyrus grows in waterlogged environments such as swamps and along lake edges and shores, as well as in slow-moving rivers. It grows well in full sun and rich soil.

Growth requirements:

- Annual temperatures range 20–30°C.
- Annual rainfall range 10-42 mm.
- pH range 6.0–8.5.



Reproduction and Communication

Cyperus papyrus is reproduced sexually by seeds and vegetatively through the rhizomes. Flowers are not colorful and are pollinated by the wind rather than insects.



Life span

Cyperus plants can live for an average of 3-5 years.



Size

Cyperus papyrus can grow up to 5–6 metres.



Parts



Stems are bright green, linear, thread-like, around 10-30 cm in length.

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Roots are tough and able to extend 1 m or more. Rootlets are numerous.



Leaves are alternate, reduced, sheathing, reddish-blackish brown in colour when young.



Flowers are in cylindrical, 30 mm long and 10 mm diameter spikes with flattened, numerous spikelets and brown, numerous, 10mm long involucre bractes.



Fruits are trigonous, obovoid, 1mm long by 0.5 across, grey-brown nuts.



Seeds are light, numerous, and enclosed in nuts.

INTRODUCTION

Aquatic grass herb

Cyperus papyrus, the papyrus sedge, is a tall, aquatic, herbaceous, perennial sedge native to central, eastern and southern Africa and the Nile Valley. The centre of its origin is the area of the White Nile in Sudan, from where it spread west through central Africa and south to Madagascar and Zimbabwe. The plant is characterized by a stout creeping rhizome and numerous culms or bright green, thread-like stems. It can form dense and extensive wetland stands and grows either rooted in shallow water or in large, free-floating clumps. In its native environment, *Cyperus papyrus* is famous as a source of material for the making of paper. More recently it is used as material for biofuel, as an effective natural biofilter for aquatic pollutants, and has been recognised for its contribution to ecosystem functions and services.

In Sudan, *Cyperus papyrus* is widely distributed in the White Nile and most abundant in the White Nile State. It is considered a usefull weed commonly used as material for building as well as for boat construction.

LIVELIHOODS / CULTURE

Cultivation

Cyperus papyrus grows naturally in Sudan. It is wild and found in abundance in its growing areas, especially the White Nile. There is no traditional practice for its cultivation.

Cultural Value

Cyperus papyrus is used for livestock feeding. The whole culms are used for buildings, roofing, and boat construction while the fibrous parts of the culms are used for making ropes.

Cyperus papyrus culms fibers are traditionally used as analgesic, diuretic and carminative medicines.

Cultural Expressions

Information not available.

THREATS

Cyperus papyrus is listed as of Least Concern, according to the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species in 2017. However, water level fluctuations due to global climate change, could threaten papyrus wetlands in the future. Drainage and burning of swamps for agricultural expansion, urbanization, and over-exploitation are aso common regional threats.

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