

A beautiful thorn in the flesh

The nature was marked by the heat wave. The heat, which as a heavy warm duvet, was located above the landscape. All life dozed all day long. All plants appeared dormant and the flora showed signs of seriously suffering from drought.

Close by the river, the situation seems quite different. Summer days like this makes it good to have a closer look at a stream.

The clear, flowing water puts us at our ease. The plant life along the riverside avidly sucks the stream water up, and the chilly water feels fresh and cool in the hot summer.

Along the river and down in the river the plant bur reed grows. It is a peculiar plant. It has two kinds of leaves. Some leaves are stiff and stand right up in the air. Other leaves are developed as underwater leaves.

The bur reed is not a popular plant. The plant clogs up the streams. Therefore, the water level rises, and the surrounding fields may be flooded. Therefore, many resources are used to remove the plant and its underwater leaves. The leaves can be as long as two meters.

The bur reed is the most common species in the Danish rivers due to its good adaptation to heavy-handed maintenance. It has a very high growth rate and hidden reserves in the roots, allowing rapid re-growth after cutting. The rapid regrowth gives the bur reed a head start in the battle for space, and the plant can thus oust other, more rare species.

I look at the long underwater leaves out in the river. It is incredible that something so unpopular can be so beautiful in its shape and colour.



*The river,
Lindenberg Å,
Himmerland,
June 2018*

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Go to the Text