

How to Control Bamboo

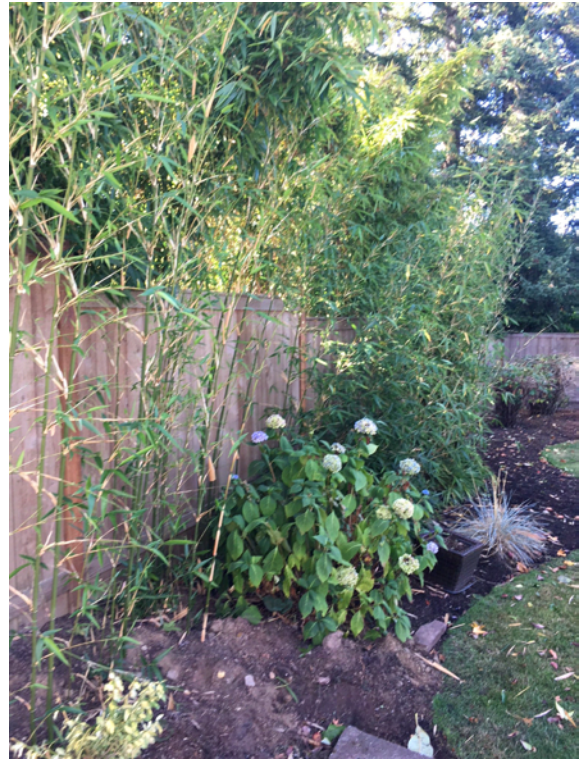
Here is a running Bamboo (ph. Faustuosa) growing out of root barrier. It has been a good privacy screen but one neighbour would like to keep it and the other wants it gone. The cheapest quote they were given was US\$4,000. I am going to do the job myself using my **10 year old Slammer Tool**.



The root barrier has done it's job well for the last 8 years, however the bamboo has found a way under the barrier and now poses a big threat to existing plants, irrigation and relations between the neighbours.



As you can see, it's a tight working space and that bamboo will be loving the concrete footings of the fence.



This Bamboo is just looking for space and food as it's family grows. Now it's time for the kids to be on their own and disconnected from the momma plant.

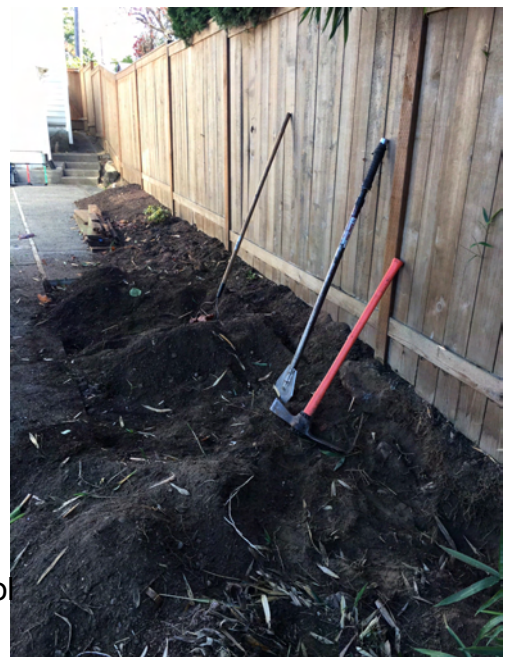


Time to slam out bamboo growing outside the barrier zone. We want nice chunks because later we are going to use this bamboo elsewhere, so don't want to kill it.



Oh no! There are two sets of concrete footings. One from the old fence and one from the new. Plus old fencing wire throughout the bamboo roots. Ah well, the Slammer makes short work of it. Abrasion resistant steel is used for the blade of the Slammer and even after cutting through concrete, it keeps its edge to cut through the roots without having to sharpen.

Sweep all signs of bamboo roots from area. Including under the concrete patio. I find a Mattock is the best too for this.



Here comes the fun part. The first chunk of roots out of the barrier is the hardest. (Think about a very root bound plant with really deep roots.) Start by slamming a line and prying up against the barrier. Slam deep and pry wisely if roots are not cut you could bend your tool. (If this happens, flip it over and exert same amount of force to bend it back.)



Uh oh, more concrete. Slam it out! Use that 5 sided Slammer blade to get into tight spaces and rock tool left to right to walk out, instead of pulling it out. Use your legs and core muscles, not your back.



Get all those roots out, including the ones sucking on the concrete. Bamboo loves the lime in the concrete.

Bamboo growing through concrete never ceases to amaze me.



Getting some good chunks now and these will regenerate into beautiful new plants.



That is what bamboo roots look like after 8 years in barrier. Try digging that out with a spade - Not going to happen!

4 hours later, using a Slammer tool, it's gone!



Now I have 28 very viable bamboo root balls. I put them on Craig's list and within 24 hours had 50 people who wanted them. I sold them for US\$1,000.

Next dig out root barrier and any existing roots with a mattock. Leave ditch exposed.



I love my Slammer and it's 10 years old! I cannot reiterate enough how much more effectively and efficiently I can work with a Slammer tool.



Barrier out, make a trench along fence.



Rake topsoil back, and transplant the plants you moved in the beginning.



Refill trench with a material that will be easy to monitor any new growth from the neighbour's bamboo. Cut new roots twice a year, spring and fall. Bamboo is a low maintenance plant if you keep on top of it (much less than the lawn).

I would advise the neighbours they need to Slam out a chunk or two and put compost in the hole so the bamboo will be happy in the spot desired. Easy peasy, happy neighbours and an end to mis-understanding this incredible plant.