



A GUIDE TO  
IDENTIFYING,  
LOCATING  
AND  
CONTROLLING  
JAPANESE  
KNOTWEED

Knotweed invasion!

# JAPANESE KNOTWEED

*Fallopia Japonica*

## NATIVE RANGE

Japan and South East Asia.

## CURRENT HABITAT

Widespread throughout the region particularly on riverbanks, roadside verges and wasteland.

## SPECIES DESCRIPTION

First introduced to the UK in the early nineteenth century and has been growing wild in Wales for a little over 120 years. It is a tall vigorous herbaceous perennial that can reach 3m in height. It has tall bamboo like stems that are red/green in colour and green shield shaped leaves.



The root system of Japanese Knotweed is an extensive system of rhizomes that can extend in excess of 7m laterally and to a depth greater than 2m.

There is no evidence of Japanese Knotweed reproducing from seed in the UK all new growth is from stem or rhizome section cuttings. The rhizome of the plant is highly regenerative with as little as 0.5g sufficient to support new growth.

## IDENTIFICATION FEATURES

### STEMS

Can be 2-3m in length, hollow jointed, green/purple/red in colour with regular nodes similar to bamboo. Dried stems are often visible from previous years growth particularly evident in winter months. New growth appears in early spring with a period of vigorous growth seeing full height reached by late May.



### LEAVES

Leaves are green in colour and borne in an alternate zig zag pattern on reddish stems. These have a flattened base and pointed tip and can be up to 120mm in length.

### FLOWERS

The plant will flower in late July/August through till October, these are creamy white flowers that form in drooping clusters.



### RHIZOME

Japanese Knotweed has an extensive network of rhizomes these may extend to a depth of 3m and laterally up to 7m. They are thick and knotted or gnarled in appearance with regular nodes, if broken the centre is bright orange with a distinctive core like appearance.

## CONTROLS

The aim of all forms of control is to prevent spread and ultimately eradicate Japanese Knotweed.

### MECHANICAL CONTROL

Mechanical control of Japanese Knotweed will involve large-scale excavations to remove all rhizome material in its entirety, this must then be disposed of appropriately or left in situ for appropriate treatment.

Cutting or pulling can be very time consuming and may take in excess of 10 years for control to be achieved, consideration must also be given to disposing of arisings to prevent reinfestation.

All waste from Japanese Knotweed including plant and root material must be disposed of as special or controlled waste under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and the Environmental Protection Act Duty of Care Regulations 1991.

Further detailed advice can be found in The Japanese Knotweed code of Practice produced by the **Environment Agency**.

### CHEMICAL CONTROL

Herbicide treatment will generally take at least three seasons to be effective. Glyphosate applied to the plant between flowering and senescence (yellowing) will provide best results and may reduce the infestation by 90% after one application.

It is important to note that following herbicide application Japanese Knotweed rhizome can remain dormant and any activity that breaks the surface of the soil may promote new growth.

If herbicides are to be used on or near a watercourse prior approval will need to be sought from the **Environment Agency**.

## LEGISLATION

It is an offence under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 to plant or cause to grow wild any plant listed in schedule nine part two of the Act. Japanese Knotweed is on this list.

