

Japanese Knotweed

Japanese Knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*) is an invasive alien plant that causes damage to the urban environment and adversely affects biodiversity.

The plant forms large stands (groups of plants, or stems) and grows to a height of up to 3m. Underground stems, called rhizomes, extend away from the plant and can damage hard landscaping and even building foundations. It can grow in almost any environment but is especially common in brown field sites, along railway lines or where fly-tipping has occurred.

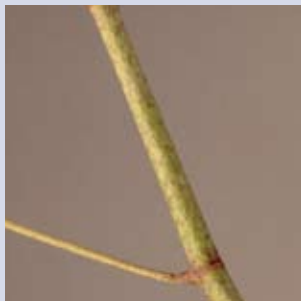
Early identification is essential to reduce damage and prevent costly control.



Identification

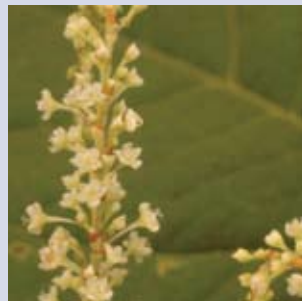
Stem

- Bamboo appearance
- Hollow
- Regular nodes
- Purple speckles



Flower

- Appear late summer - autumn
- Cream colour
- Clusters 80 - 120mm long



Leaves

- Shield shaped, flat at base
- Lush green colour
- Up to 120mm
- May show yellow streaks caused by wind



Rhizome

- Yellow when cut
- Snaps like carrot
- Distinctive smell
- Knotty in appearance





Surveying throughout the Year



Rhizome Checkbox

please tick

- Twig like appearance
- Young rhizome white and soft
- Brittle when fresh, like carrot
- Dark brown exterior
- Texture of bark leathery
- Tissue inside pale orange / yellow
- Nodes every 1 - 2 cm
- Nodes slightly enlarged and knotty
- If present, fresh buds pink
- Interior carrot colour
- Central core darker
- Cortex with rays

If over half ticked, suspect Japanese Knotweed





What next?



Step 1: Containment

Priority must be given to the prevention of spread once Japanese Knotweed is discovered. It is easy for plant machinery and personnel to accidentally spread contaminated material. Basic measures should be taken to:

- Establish a barrier around infestation
- Brief personnel of the plant's presence
- Prevent access by machinery
- Prevent works within 7m of infested areas
- Seek professional assistance



Step 2: Site Assessment

Accurate assessment is key to the success of any Japanese Knotweed removal project. It is not only vital to ascertain the area affected by above ground plants but also the extent of the rhizome network. Key factors include:

- Site history
- Hard landscaping / buildings on site
- Buried works
- Buried rhizome
- Site hydrology
- Other site ecology



Step 3: Control and Management

A variety of options are available to manage Japanese Knotweed. Each site should have a professionally tailored eradication programme. Key considerations include:

- Herbicides, which can be highly effective if applied by an experienced Japanese Knotweed expert
- Monitoring sites to assess control
- Early action to increase success of control and reduce cost

Remember poor management can exacerbate the problem. Always seek professional advice.





The Law

- It is illegal to accidentally or deliberately cause Japanese Knotweed to spread in the wild (Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981)
- Japanese Knotweed contaminated waste must be taken to landfill as 'special waste' (Section 34, Environmental Protection Act 1990)

Expertise

RPS have offices across the whole of the UK and offer Integrated Japanese Knotweed solutions wherever your site. Our services include:

- Full assessment of all invasive weed and ecological site issues
- Full capability with innovative control methods
- Experience of 10 years invasive weed control
- Rapid response unit to carry out surveys within 2 days of primary contact

Contacts & Advice

Environment Agency

(www.environment-agency.gov.uk)

Cornwall Knotweed Forum

(<http://www.cornwall.gov.uk/environment/knotweed/japl.htm>)

Welsh Development Agency

(<http://www.wda.co.uk>)

Japanese Knotweed Manual

(Wade and Child 2000, Packard Publishing Limited)

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