

# Japanese Knotweed

## *Invasive Plant Fact Sheet*

### DESCRIPTION

Japanese knotweed (*Lat. Fallopia japonica*) is native to eastern Asia and was introduced to North America as a horticultural plant in the late 19th century. Typically found on roadsides, drainage ditches, and along rivers, including the Mystic River. It forms dense thickets of bamboo-like vegetation that aggressively outcompete native plants and negatively impacts wetland and shore edges.

### WHY IS IT BAD?

Japanese Knotweed creates a thick stand of plants that prevents native wildflowers and young trees from growing. This limits the availability of food for insects and animals. It also blocks physical access to forests and waterways, disrupting our enjoyment.

### DISTRIBUTION & SPREAD

This invasive species spreads in two ways: by rhizomes underground and by growing new plants from any parts of the plant that have been disturbed.

### WHY YOU SHOULD CARE

- Knotweed displaces native plantings, endangering local biodiversity
- Knotweed is a highly destructive plant, invading residential foundations, driveways, roadways, and public infrastructure
- Labor-intensive and lengthy removal process.



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# CONTROL METHODS

## HERBICIDE METHOD

- Allow the knotweed to grow in the spring without doing any type of management until the **first week in June**.
- Cut the knotweed at the base as close to the ground as possible during the first week of June.
- **Pile the cut stems on an impervious surface** such as a tarp, plastic, pavement, etc., so they can dry out.
- Allow the remaining knotweed to resprout.
- Apply a **3-to-5% solution of a glyphosate-based herbicide, such as Roundup**. Apply to thoroughly wet all foliage, but not to the point of runoff.
- If re-sprouting occurs the following year, repeat the steps above.
- **The treatment window starts in mid-August or when the plant begins to flower and lasts until the leaves and stalks of the plants die and begin to dry out after a frost, typically by early October in Medford.**

## NON-HERBICIDE METHOD

- Repeat cutting during the growing season to exhaust the root system.
- This method needs to be **continued for 3-4 years for complete removal**.



## POST TREATMENT

### ABOVE-GROUND PLANT MATERIALS

- Plant canes/cuttings should be placed on asphalt, tarps, or heavy plastic, then covered to prevent the knotweed from blowing away.
- Smaller amounts can be placed in heavy-duty trash bags
- Keep plant materials bagged/covered for at least one month, to let the plant matter decompose.
- Once it is partially decomposed/slimy/brittle, it can be disposed of in your household trash or yard waste pickup - **don't dispose of fresh cuttings in your yard waste, as it will spread knotweed to new locations.**

## ROOTS AND RHIZOMES

Roots/below-ground materials take longer to dry out or decompose; it's recommended to bag roots and rhizomes and dispose of in household trash.

*Example of rhizome*



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