

Scientific Name: *Reynoutria japonica*

Common Name: Japanese Knotweed

Updated: 5/5/2016

A. Priority: A

Description – Japanese Knotweed is a perennial shrub with hollow, bamboo like stalks and simple alternate leaves (6in long and 5in wide). It can grow up to 10 feet in height and can spread 20-65 feet wide via underground rhizomes. Japanese Knotweed was introduced from Asia through Britain in the late 1800's as an ornamental. Knotweed flowers are small and cream colored, arranged in spikes within the leaf axis near the end of the stalk. Its fruits are winged with dark and glossy seeds that are spread by wind, water, birds and insects. Knotweed is often found along stream and river banks, as well as roadsides, woodland edges, and wet depressions. It can tolerate many soil and moisture conditions.

Damage and threats – Japanese Knotweed poses a large threat to native flora/fauna and the natural communities they depend on. Knotweed can successfully form dense monocultures and create a thick layer of leaf and stem material, effectively choking out any native vegetation. Knotweed also limits light, alters nutrient cycling, and releases toxic/inhibiting chemicals into the soil. Additionally, Knotweed will contribute to stream bank erosion, flooding and poor water quality.

B. Management Options

Mechanical Control:

Japanese Knotweed is notoriously difficult to control. Mechanical control alone is not recommended due to Knotweed's ability to regenerate from underground rhizomes as long as 3 years after initial treatment. Some success can be seen with hand pulling of young seedlings. Cutting/mowing knotweed is not recommended due to its ability to regenerate from nodes along the stem. If any part of the plant is removed/cut it needs to be bagged or burned to ensure spread of the infestation does not occur.

Chemical Control: Use of a systematic herbicide is the best option to control Knotweed. We recommend using aquatic formulations of herbicides in this region to limit potentially unwanted effects to the surrounding environment.

- a. Foliar Spray** – This method involves spraying a dilute herbicide directly onto the plants leaves. Application needs to occur when foliage is present, sometime between full leaf and the onset of fall for full effectiveness. Caution should be taken when applying herbicide with this method as non-target plants can easily be killed by drift or overspray. Application should cover at least 80% of the leaves. To treat, use a 4-8% solution of aquatic triclopyr in water with a 0.5% non-ionic surfactant and apply directly to leaves until just before runoff. Air temperatures must be above 65 degrees and winds should be lower than 5 mph.

- b. Cut Stump** – This method involves cutting the stem just below the second node from the ground and immediately applying a systematic herbicide into the hollow cavity and on the cut surface. It is best to use this method between summer and fall, but it may be used as long as the ground is not frozen. To treat using this method, apply .0365oz (10.65ml) of a 50% formulation of aquatic glyphosate or triclopyr directly into the internode cavity. Treated plants should be continually monitored for re-sprouting. This method is recommended for treating small and large populations.

C. Recommended Management Strategy

- a.** Due to the nature of this species, we recommend that management strategies are developed for each specific site.
- b.** In general, we recommend treating via foliar spray to limit the potential for spreading this species by cutting.

D. Additional and Updated Information

For additional information including photographs and the most up to date control recommendations please visit www.wachng.org/Plants.