

# Japanese Knotweed (*Polygonum cuspidatum*)

Also known as Mexican bamboo. A listed prohibited noxious weed in Oregon, Washington and California.

**Threat:** Japanese knotweed grows very quickly, effectively shading out low-growing herbs and small shrubs • Forms monocultures in areas with disturbed soils, such as along roadways and stream banks • Japanese knotweed is a major threat to water quality.

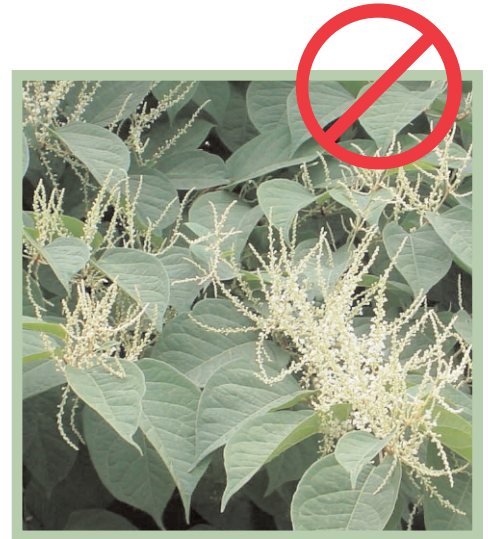
**Description:** Perennial herb with bamboo-like, hollow stems. Branches arch from clumps up to 10 feet tall • Alternate leaves are about 6 inches long and roughly heart-shaped with a flat base • Giant knotweed (*Polygonum sachalinense*) looks similar, but grows much larger, leaves averaging 12" long.

**History:** Introduced as an ornamental plant to North America in the 19th century.

**Spread:** Root fragments will readily resprout and stem fragments will root under proper conditions • Rarely reproduces via seed • Giant and Japanese knotweed species will hybridize.

**Control:** Repeated cutting of stems (once every two weeks) may be a successful treatment on small patches  
 • Small patches may be dug out, but repeated digging and careful monitoring is necessary because deep roots will resprout • Do not allow any plant fragments to remain on the ground • Compost roots or cuttings on a tarp until completely decomposed • Most promising control method is injection of herbicide at the lower node of each stem by licensed chemical applicator • Contact your county weed agency for help in controlling this extremely invasive weed.

**Alternatives:** Sunflowers are large (tall) plants with charismatic flowers • Douglas spirea (*Spirea douglasii*) is a 3 to 6 ft tall shrub with pink flower clusters that thrives in wet soil. Consult your local nursery for appropriate, non-invasive alternatives.



courtesy of WSSA and XID Services Inc.



courtesy of Nature Conservancy

For more information:

USDA National Agricultural Library- [www.invasivespecies.gov/profiles/japktwd.shtml](http://www.invasivespecies.gov/profiles/japktwd.shtml)

The Knotweed Alliance- [www.cabi-bioscience.org/html/japanese\\_knotweed\\_alliance.htm](http://www.cabi-bioscience.org/html/japanese_knotweed_alliance.htm)

Controlling Knotweed in the Pacific Northwest-

<http://tncweeds.ucdavis.edu/moredocs/polssp01.pdf>



**4 COUNTY**  
**Cooperative Weed**  
**Management Area**

Prepared by Kyle Spinks, Natural Resources Department of Tualatin Hills Park and Recreation District, as a project for the Clackamas, Clark, Multnomah, and Washington Counties Cooperative Weed Management Area. Designed: Environmental Services, City of Portland. ES 0701