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Japanese Knotweed

Species Description

Scientific name: Fallopia japonica AKA: Japanese Bamboo, Pysen saethwr (Welsh), Polygonum cuspidatum, Reynoutria japonica Native to: Japan, Taiwan, northern China Habitat: Common in urban areas, particularly on waste land, railways, road sides and river banks

Tall herbaceous perennial with bamboo like stems. Often grows into dense thickets. Characteristic leaves and stems, persistence of last year's dead canes and distinctive rhizome (underground root-like stems) enables year round identification.

Introduced in the early 19th century as an ornamental plant. Now common and widespread across the UK. Spreads rapidly in the wild by natural means and as a result of spread by humans. Spread is solely by vegetative means, either fragments of rhizome or stem. Does not produce seed in the UK. Negative impacts include outcompeting native flora, contributing to river bank erosion and increasing the likelihood of flooding. Can also cause significant delays and cost to development as well as structural damage (it can grow through asphalt and some other surfaces).

Japanese Knotweed is listed under Schedule 9 to the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 with respect to England, Wales and Scotland. As such it is an offence to plant of otherwise cause Japanese knotweed to grow in the wild. Under the Environmental Protection Act 1990, Japanese Knotweed is classified as controlled waste.

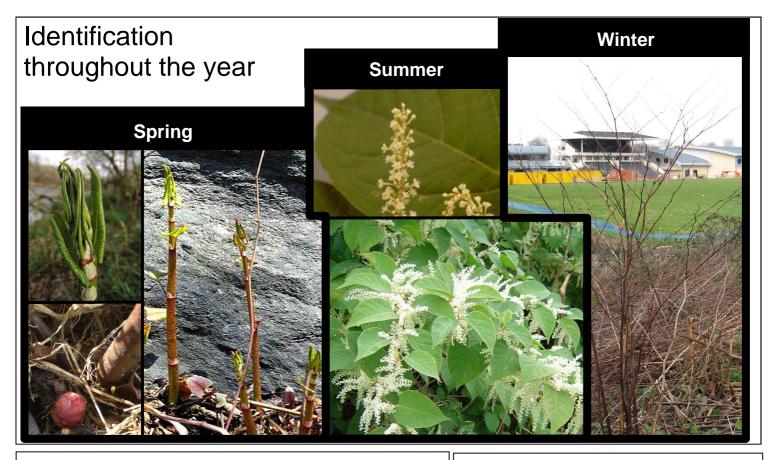
For details of legislation go to www.nonnativespecies.org/legislation.



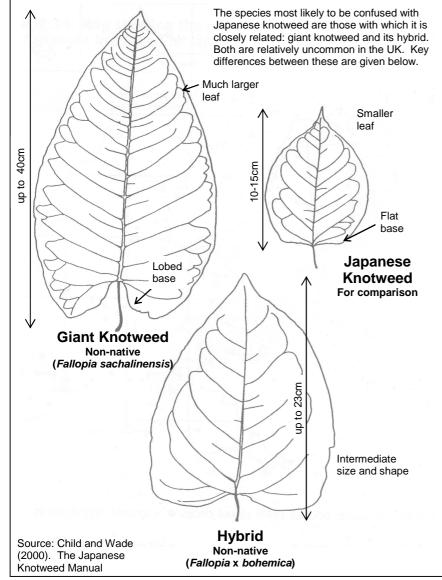
Shield shaped

Key ID Features



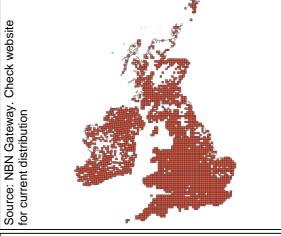


Similar Species



Distribution

Widespread and common across the UK. Notably extensive infestations are found in the south-west of England, south Wales and Greater London, however similarly extensive populations can also be found elsewhere.



References and further reading:

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Environment Agency (2006) "*The Japanese Knotweed Code of Practice*". Environment Agency

Preston, C D, Pearman, D A and Dines, T A (editors) (2002) *"New Atlas of the British and Irish Flora".* Oxford University Press

Stace, C (1999) *"Field Flora of the British Isles".* Cambridge University Press