

Japanese Knotweed

What is Japanese Knotweed?

Japanese Knotweed (*Fallopia japonica* var *japonica* (Houtt.)) is an upright, shrub-like herbaceous perennial plant widely considered the most invasive alien plant found in Britain today. Introduced in the 1800s as an ornamental plant, it has subsequently spread throughout the UK and Europe to become a pest species with major economic impact.

How do you identify Knotweed?

During late spring the rhizome (root) system produces new shoots which on emergence appear like red-tinged asparagus. The shoots grow particularly rapidly, becoming more bamboo-like and fleshy green red tinged in colour, and may reach 2 metres by the end of May and exceed 3 metres by the end of August. Mature leaves are light green and heart shaped; in late August the plant produces clusters of small cream sterile flowers.

Why is Knotweed such a problem?

Knotweed rhizomes (roots) spread rapidly and can be transferred by vehicles, footwear and watercourses. If left unmanaged, Japanese Knotweed will readily damage built structures such as drains, foundations, block walls, tarmac and concrete.

In the wild, knotweed can rapidly colonize a range of habitats to seriously degrade local ecology by out-competing native plants whilst providing poor habitat for native fauna.

For these reasons, Japanese Knotweed is a controlled species under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and, as such, it is an offence to allow it to spread to other land, and soil contaminated with rhizome material must be disposed of appropriately.

These factors can result in significantly reduced land values for knotweed contaminated sites.

Whose responsibility is it?

The responsibility for the control of knotweed usually rests with the landowner or tenant of the land. The Environment Agency and Local Authority are not obliged to control knotweed on behalf of others.



How can REC Help?

REC Ecology staff have extensive experience with Japanese knotweed and all other invasive UK plant species and can provide advice at all stages of the remediation process:

- Cost effective field identification and site surveys for all invasive / Schedule 9 species.
- Remediation strategy cost – benefit analyses and methodology risk assessment.
- Develop & undertake remediation strategies specific to your preferred schedule.
- Provide liaison with statutory bodies and planning authorities.
- We provide a complete service - from pre-purchase site survey through remediation to verification and post treatment monitoring.
- Our staff have extensive experience working with Japanese knotweed and many other aspects of ecology including protected habitats, plants and animals.
- We are a national company, providing our services across 10 regional offices, so there is always someone in your region to assist you.

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UK Offices in Manchester, Birmingham, Braintree, Fareham, Huddersfield, Newcastle, Port Talbot
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