

THIS INVASIVE PLANT GROWS ALONG STREAM BANKS AND IN DISTURBED AREAS

# JAPANESE KNOTWEED

Japanese knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*) looks very similar to bamboo although it is not related. This fast growing herbaceous perennial originates from Asia. It was first introduced in the 1800s as an ornamental species for gardens and has been used to control erosion on riverbanks. Knotweed forms thick colonies that crowd out other plants. It is widespread in the Lake George watershed where it is found along roadsides, streams and in disturbed areas. Knotweed has been used in medicinal supplements. Young stems are also edible and can be added to salads, used in soups, and even made into jam.

Japanese knotweed is an upright shrub-like plant and has jointed, hollow stems with alternating leathery leaves that are ovate and broad. They have a cascade of beautiful white flowers that blossom in August and September. Knotweed can grow to over 10 feet in height. Growth rates can



Japanese knotweed grows voraciously and has been documented to grow 3-4 inches in one day.

reach 3 to 4 inches per day during the summer. It will have reddish-brown stems in winter that are very visible. Knotweed spreads by root expansion and seeds. A plant will have either male or female

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flowers. Male flowers are very rare in the United States, new plants form from rhizomes or cut stems. Rhizomes can extend horizontally through soils for more than 60 feet.

Knotweed greatly alters natural ecosystems. Once established populations are extremely persistent and can even survive severe flooding. They can grow along stream banks, block water flow, degrades trout spawning habitat, chokes drainage ditches, breaks up pavement, forms dense stands, prevents native growth, displaces wildlife and can create a fire hazard in winter. Knotweed can tolerate heavy shade, high temperatures, drought, floods and soils that are high in salt. They can be found growing in wetlands, waste sites, along roadsides, and along railroad tracks. Knotweed is often spread to new locations in contaminated fill.

Movement of contaminated soils spreads knotweed very easily. Methods of infestation include, excavation, landscaping, roadside ditch construction, dredging, removal of riparian buffers, and not properly disposing of knotweed clippings. While systematic herbicide can be effective it is dangerous to the surrounding plants



The best control known for knotweed is a chemical treatment by a licensed applicator.

and wildlife. The best control is to prevent knotweed from becoming established is by thorough and systematic removal and incineration of plants.

Here are the best ways to prevent its spread:

- Landscape with native plants;
- Remove invasive plants from your property;
- Never compost terrestrial invasive plants;
- Avoid disturbing the land such as the removal of riparian or stream buffers; and,
- Know the source of your fill and mulch.

**We need your help to protect Lake George from invasive species.**

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