

Invasive non native species: Japanese Knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*)

Japanese Knotweed is an invasive non-native perennial growing up to 2m tall from an extensive system of rhizomes. It does not produce seed in the UK, but grows instead from small fragments of root transported by humans or water. It thrives on disturbed and degraded land so is typically seen on urban wasteland and along rivers where flood water can easily move root fragments



Japanese Knotweed causes problems as it spreads:

Environmental impact: Japanese Knotweed can crowd out native plants and reduce biodiversity.

Health and social impact: it impedes access for anglers, boaters and other river users. Disputes can arise over its control, especially when land use is impacted.

Economic impact: it is notorious for pushing through asphalt, foundations and drains. Infestation can add huge costs to development schemes, costing up to £1000 per square metre to eradicate from construction sites. Controlled disposal of the waste is required which adds to the costs incurred. Knotweed can devalue your house and some mortgage providers will refuse a mortgage where it is present. It is illegal to allow it to spread from your land to the wild.

The cost of treating Japanese Knotweed-infected areas in England alone is £152 million a year.

Biosecurity: you can help stop the spread of invasive non native species, which can cause problems and are expensive to treat, through the following actions:

CHECK your equipment, clothing and footwear

CLEAN everything thoroughly, use hot water if possible

DRY everything, as some species can survive for up to two weeks in damp conditions



Image credits: GBNNSS, Tube Lines Ltd, GBNNSS



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