

Invasive Knotweeds

Japanese, Bohemian and Giant

(*Fallopia - japonica*, *X bohemica*, *sachalinensis*)

Knotweed was introduced from Asia as an ornamental plant, and is considered among the world's most tenacious invasive plants. It can regrow from tiny stem and root fragments, spreads rapidly and is extremely difficult to eradicate once established. It forms dense stands which outcompete native plants and threaten local ecology. Stalks can push through thick pavement, and damage pipes and concrete foundations.



How to identify Knotweed

- Young shoots look like red asparagus.
- Stems resemble bamboo, hollow, green with reddish/purple speckles, jointed, 1-3.5m tall with Giant Knotweed reaching up to 6m tall.
- Leaves egg to heart-shaped with pointed tip, alternate, 8-20cm wide and 15-20cm long, with Giant Knotweed twice the size.
- Flowers in Aug-Sept, small, white to greenish clusters.
- Winter stems persist as bare reddish/brown stalks.

Habitat and Biology

- Found especially in disturbed soil and open habitats, gardens, and along roadsides and watercourses.
- Perennial shrub-like herb, grows from rhizomes.
- Reproduces primarily by roots/rhizomes, from stem fragments left on moist soil, and by seed in hybrid Bohemian species.
- New shoots emerge in April, grow up to 8cm per day in June until they reach maximum height, then die back to ground with first frost.
- Rhizomes overwinter under ground and sprout again in spring.
- Rhizomes spread rapidly, up to 20m laterally and 3m deep, and have been known to remain dormant up to 20 years.
- Dispersal by fragments of roots and stems (or seeds) entering waterways, or transported in fill or by contaminated equipment.

What should you do?

Knotweed is a serious problem. Act NOW to help stop the spread.

1. Be aware

- Learn how to identify Knotweed species.
- Know what is growing on your property.
- Investigate the best treatment options for your situation.

2. Prevent spread

- Beware of gravel or fill from unknown origins – it may be contaminated with Knotweed roots or plant parts.
- Report sales or distribution of this plant.
- Avoid transporting any part of the plant or roots.

3. Take action right away!

- If you are dealing with Knotweed, seek professional advice.
- Small patches (less than 30 stalks) may be successfully treated by manually cutting back stems at least every 2 weeks. Clean all equipment and avoid spreading cuttings or seeds.
- Medium to large sites should be handled by professionals. If pesticide use is deemed necessary, contractors must have a valid 'BC Pesticide Applicators Certificate for Noxious Weeds'.
- Any treatment method takes commitment over several years.
- Work with your neighbours. One patch of knotweed may be part of the same plant up to 20m away.

Proper Disposal (current best practices)

- Due to risk of spread, Knotweed is currently NOT accepted at any SCRD waste or 'green waste' facilities.
- Cuttings: Leave on site, up off the ground, or on a tarp to dry out in the sun. *Completely dry, crisp* stalks are unviable and may only then be safely disposed of, or burned where and when permitted.
- Roots: Once the plant has been treated (manually or with pesticides), roots are best left in the ground until the plant has died. If at all possible, avoid digging out roots.
- **DO NOT HOME COMPOST or ILLEGALLY DUMP**



Together we can control the spread of invasive Knotweed!

For more information: www.scrd.ca/Invasive-Species
www.bcinvasives.ca



To report Knotweed sites on the Sunshine Coast
go to: www.reportaweedbc.ca