THE PROBLEM

Knotweed…

- Spreads rapidly and forms dense thickets
- Displaces native vegetation
- Spreads quickly along waterways: limits access, alters wildlife habitat, and increases erosion
- Invades new areas by growing from stem and root fragments
- Breaks through pavement and cement with its roots, damaging buildings and infrastructure

WHERE IS IT COMING FROM?

Knotweed was originally brought to North America from Asia in the 1800s and entered the Midwest in the mid 1900s. Its lush growth and showy flowers made it a popular landscape plant, often used as a living fence. From there plants spread aggressively, wreaking havoc on urban and natural areas alike.

Left: © Leslie J. Mehrhoff, University of Connecticut, Bugwood.org ; Right: Knotweed breaking a building foundation in Sault Ste. Marie, Nick Cassel (EUPCWMA)

Knotweed is most prevalent in southern parts of Wisconsin and Michigan, but in recent years mapping efforts in northern WI and the Upper Peninsula have shown it may be more common here than previously thought. Look for dense stands in open areas of backyards, parks, and along roadways and streams.

REPORT KNOTWEED SIGHTINGS!

We need your help! Identifying and treating new infestations of knotweed is necessary to stop the spread.

To report an infestation, learn more about knotweed, or volunteer, please contact your local conservation partner. See contact information below.

Knotweed in city of Norway; Emily Anderson (WRISC)

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The UP RC&D Council is an equal opportunity provider.

Japanese Knotweed

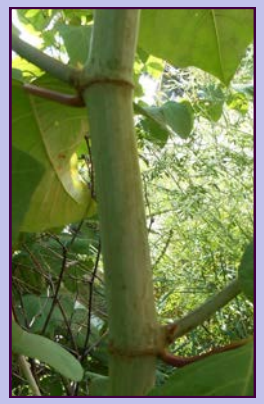
And other invasive knotweeds

© Jan Samanek, State Phytosanitary Administration, Bugwood.org

A GUIDE TO STOPPING THE SPREAD OF JAPANESE, GIANT, AND BOHEMIAN KNOTWEEDS (AKA "MICHIGAN BAMBOO")

IDENTIFICATION

Knotweeds are shrub-like perennials with bamboo-like arching stems and an extensive root system.



Photos Wild Rivers Invasive Species Coalition (left)
Leslie J. Mehrhoff, University of Connecticut, Bugwood.org (right)

Stems: Stems are round, smooth, and hollow, with reddish-brown blotches. In winter, dead stems are easy to spot in dense rust-colored stands.

Photo © Jenn Grieser, New York City Department of Environmental Protection, Bug-

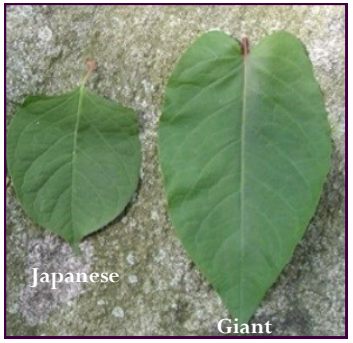
Leaves: Simple, alternate, and spade or heart-shaped, with smooth edges and a pointed tip. Size varies by species (see middle) with leaves 2/3 as wide as they are long.

© John Cardina, The Ohio State University, Bugwood.org

Flowers: Blooms in late summer with plume-like clusters of small greenish-white flowers.

KNOTWEED VARIETIES

While knotweed plants are most often called Japanese Knotweed, there are actually 3 species causing problems in the Midwest.



© Chris Leslie J. Mehrhoff, University of Connecticut, Bugwood.org

Japanese Knotweed (*Fallopia cuspidatum*)
Typically grows 5-8' tall, leaves are 1-4" long, and flat across the base.

Giant Knotweed (*Fallopia sachalinense*)
Typically grows 10' to 20' tall, leaves are 6-14" long with a heart-shaped base.

Bohemian Knotweed (*Fallopia x bohemicum*)
A hybrid between Japanese and Giant, its features are a highly variable cross between the two. Grows 6' to 16' tall, leaves 2" to 12" inches long, with a leaf base that may be heart-shaped.
Scientists now believe Bohemian Knotweed may be more widespread than previously thought.

A spreading problem: Knotweeds can produce seed but mainly spread vegetatively. Underground rhizomes spread out laterally (up to 65 feet) sending up new shoots. Rhizome fragments and even cut stems can send out roots and form new plants.

CAUTION: Any disturbance that moves plant material, such as mowing or digging, can spread a knotweed infestation.

PREVENTION

Prevention *is key to managing the spread of knotweed. Once plants are established they are very difficult to remove.*

1. NEVER buy, sell, or plant knotweed. It is not only a bad idea, but also illegal as knotweed is a regulated species in MI and WI.
2. Learn to spot knotweed and report it.
3. If cutting/mowing knotweed, properly dispose of any stems by bagging and landfilling them or burning. **DO NOT COMPOST**
4. Clean construction equipment to avoid moving soil with seeds or rhizome fragments.
5. Be careful of any compost or soil you bring onto your property. Local compost sites can be a source for knotweed to spread across a community.

CONTROL

Control *of knotweed may take years. Continue to monitor the site as rhizomes can remain dormant for 20 years.*

Manual: Pulling/digging offers more harm than good unless **all** root fragments are removed. Cutting/mowing can be used on very small populations, but must be repeated at least 3 times a year for 3+ years to be successful. Both methods risk moving viable stems and root fragments.

Chemical: Herbicide is the most common control method for knotweed. A systemic herbicide applied to the leaves at the right time and rate will move into the roots and injure the entire plant. For more information, visit mipncontroldatabase.wisc.edu or contact your local conservation partner (see back).

The most effective control is tailored to the site and may integrate several methods.