INVASIVE PLANT SPECIES FACT SHEET

IPSAWG
Invasive Plant Species Assessment Working Group

Japanese Knotweed

Polygonum cuspidatum (Fallopia japonica)

Pictures By (From Top to Bottom): J. M. Randall, J. Swearingen @ www.invasives.org and B. Rice.

Invasive Plants are a Threat to:

- **Forests and wetlands**
- **Native plants**
- **Perennial gardens**
- **Wildlife**
- **Lakes and rivers**
- **Human Health**
- **Farmland**

Date Prepared: 4/05

Description:

Japanese knotweed is an herbaceous perennial. This stout, shrub-like plant forms large dense clumps that measure between 3-9 feet high. It reproduces by seed and by large rhizomes which may reach a length of 15-18 feet. The stems are reddish in color, ridged, jointed and hollow. The leaves are alternate on the stem, broadly truncate at the base and 2-3 inches wide. The leaf veins are often reddish and the petioles are 1 inch long and ridged. The flowers bloom in late summer and are small and greenish white.

Distribution:

Japanese knotweed is found in moist, open to partially shaded habitats. It has been reported from riverbanks and islands, wetlands, along roadways, hillsides, and disturbed areas in a variety of soil types and pH's. Japanese knotweed can also tolerate adverse conditions such as high temperatures, high salinity, drought and floods. It has spread across the United States, from the Northeastern states to California. It is found in most counties in Indiana, though most populations are small (<1/4 acre).

Problem:

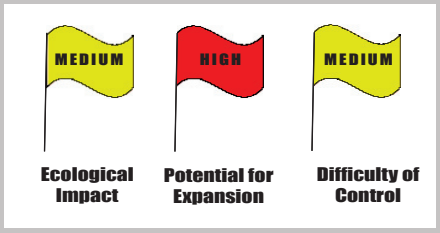
Japanese knotweed emerges in early spring and grows quickly and aggressively. It forms dense, nearly pure stands which crowd out native plants. By eliminating grasses and other native plants along creeks, the banks are less stable and more likely to shear off during flooding. This greatly increases sediment in the creek. It spreads rapidly through rhizomes and seeds. Fragments are transported to new sites by water and by human interactions. Once established, Japanese knotweed is very difficult to eradicate.

Origin:

Japanese knotweed is native to Japan, China, and parts of Korea and Taiwan. It was introduced from Japan to the United Kingdom as an ornamental plant in 1825, and from there to North America in the late nineteenth century.

Picture By: J. Randall

IPSAWG Ranking:



IPSAWG Recommendation:

- Do not buy, sell or plant Japanese knotweed in Indiana.
- Help by eradicating Japanese knotweed on your property.

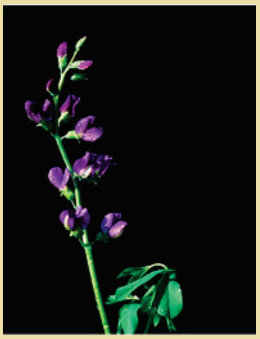
This ranking illustrates the results of an assessment conducted by the **Invasive Plant Species Assessment Working Group** (IPSAWG), which is made up of many organizations and agencies concerned about invasive plant species. IPSAWG's goal is to assess which plant species may threaten natural areas in Indiana and develop recommendations for their use in the state.

For more information about IPSAWG and the assessment tool used to rank invasive species, visit their website:

www.invasivespecies.IN.gov

ALTERNATIVES to Japanese knotweed:

New England Aster
(*Aster novae-angliae)*



Blue False Indigo
(*Baptisia australis)*

Sweet Joe-Pye-Weed
(*Eupatorium purpureum)*

Queen-of-the-Prairie
(*Filipendula rubra)*

Pictures By (Top to Bottom): J. Anderson, T. Barnes, R. Mohlenbrock and T. Barnes @ USDA-NRCS Plants Database.

Control Methods:

Manual control consists of digging out the rhizomes or cutting the stalks. However, digging is very labor intensive and tends to spread the rhizome fragments and promote disturbance and is not recommended. If cutting is used, at least three cuts are needed in a growing season just to offset rhizome production. Successful eradication is not likely with cutting alone. Glyphosate and triclopyr has been found to be effective against Japanese knotweed. Application is more effective in the fall when leaves are translocating to rhizomes. It is recommended to apply 2.0% glyphosate or triclopyr to the leaves in August with a prior cut in late spring or early summer. A 0.5% nonionic surfactant is recommended in order to penetrate the leaf cuticle. Regardless of which control is used, if some rhizomes remain in the soil Japanese knotweed will return once management is relaxed. **Always read and follow pesticide label directions.**

Japanese knotweed invading a riverbank. (Picture By: J. M. Randall)

Eight Easy Ways to Combat Invasive Plants

You can **help stop** the spread of **invasive plants** by following these **8 easy guidelines**:

1. Ask for only non-invasive species when you acquire plants. Request that nurseries and garden centers sell only non-invasive plants.
2. Seek information on invasive plants. Sources include botanical gardens, horticulturists, conservationists, and government agencies.
3. Scout your property for invasive species, and remove invasives before they become a problem. If plants can't be removed, at least prevent them from going to seed.
4. Clean your boots before and after visiting a natural area to prevent the spread of invasive plant seeds.
5. Don't release aquarium plants into the wild.
6. Volunteer at local parks and natural areas to assist ongoing efforts to diminish the threat of invasive plants.
7. Help educate your community through personal contacts and in such settings as garden clubs and civic groups.
8. Support public policies and programs to control invasive plants.

For More Information:

On this assessment and IPSAWG:

IPSAWG
www.invasivespecies.IN.gov

On identification and control techniques:

The Nature Conservancy's Wildland Weeds
www.tncweeds.ucdavis.edu

On native plant alternatives and sources:

Indiana Native Plant and Wildflower Society
www.inpaws.org