JAPANESE KNOTWEED
Polygonum cuspidatum
Polygonaceae, the buckwheat family
Category: Control

FACTSHEET INFORMATION

Summary of Invasiveness

- Japanese knotweed is a highly invasive plant that can quickly invade an area and crowd out native species, reducing biodiversity.
- It has the ability to hybridize with Giant knotweed to create Bohemian knotweed.
- The plant can tolerate a wide range of soil types and climate conditions.

Description

- Perennial that can reach 9 feet tall and has long, creeping rhizomes reaching up to 18 feet long.
- Large, broad leaves have pointed tip and flat base.
- Hollow stems have reddish-purple spots, swollen nodes and thin papery sheaths. Leaf twigs zig-zag from node to node.
- Drooping panicles have numerous small, white flowers.
- Resembles other invasive knotweeds however, Bohemian knotweed has erect flowers and Giant knotweed has larger, more elongated leaves with a heart-shaped base.

Introduction and Movement

- Japanese knotweed is native to Japan, China, Taiwan and the Korean peninsula and was introduced as a garden ornamental.
- It inhabit disturbed sites such as roadsides, pastures, wetlands, and riparian areas.
- The plant can easily spread by means of floating stem and rhizome fragments, improper disposal of garden materials, as a soil contaminant, and by hitching a ride on vehicles.

Prevention Strategy

- To prevent accidental introductions, learn how to identify Japanese knotweed and eradicate infestations on your property.
- When gardening, always research plants before planting and only purchase seeds from licensed nurseries.
- Always remove and properly dispose of all seed and plant materials on vehicles, clothing, shoes and pets before you exit or enter outdoor recreational sites.
- Always Remember To: KNOW WHAT YOU GROW & KNOCK IT OFF!

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Jan Samanek, Phytosanitary Administration, Bugwood.org

Sources
- CABI Invasive Species Compendium: https://www.cabi.org/isc/datasheet/23875
- Idaho's Noxious Weeds 9th Edition, University of Idaho: http://www.extension.uidaho.edu/publishing/pdf/BUL/BUL 816.pdf.

JAPANESE KNOTWEED
DISTRIBUTION MAP

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STATE DEPARTMENT
OF AGRICULTURE