

WHAT NOW?



Japanese knotweed poses a serious threat to wildlife and infrastructure. It is very costly to control. This plant is creating severe problems in other countries and is spreading rapidly in Clare and throughout Ireland. Now is the time to do something about it!

This is a case where prevention is definitely better than cure. Prevention is more effective and much less costly. Earth from infested areas should **NEVER** be moved as this is the main cause of the spread of Japanese knotweed.

All landowners are responsible for preventing this plant from becoming established on their land. Landowners that are unfortunate enough to have the weed already on their property, should take the appropriate steps to prevent its further spread and ensure that it is killed off immediately.



Japanese knotweed roots are very strong and have been known to grow through tarmac.

Japanese knotweed is widely distributed and spreading rapidly in County Clare. It is mainly found along road and river sides in places such as Lissycasey, Lisdoonvarna, Newmarket-on-Fergus, Killaloe, Kilmihil and parts of the Burren.

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For more information:

National Parks and Wildlife Service, 7 Ely Place, Dublin 2 Tel: 1890 20202 Website: www.npws.ie

Teagasc, Oak Park, Carlow Tel: 059 9170200 Website: www.teagasc.ie

www.habitas.org.uk/invasive/index.html

www.cornwall.gov.uk/environment/knotweed

www.cabi-bioscience.org/html/japanese-kotweed-alliance

www.netregs.gov.uk/netregs/processes/367836/?version=1&lang=_e

www.devon.gov.uk/environment/natural_environment/biodiversity/japanese_knotweed.htm

www.wrt.org.uk

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Alien Invasion



JAPANESE KNOTWEED

Japanese knotweed is an alien, invasive, plant that was first introduced to Ireland more than 100 years ago.

This plant forms dense thickets along roadsides, waste ground and waterways. It reproduces rapidly by vegetative means and is difficult to kill off once it becomes established. Japanese knotweed is included among the list of the 100 most invasive alien species in the world.

We need to stop it spreading now!

We are all responsible for preventing the spread of this plant.

This leaflet aims to inform everyone about the dangers posed by this plant and the methods that can be used to control it.

HOW DO I RECOGNISE THE ALIEN?

Japanese knotweed was brought to Ireland as an ornamental garden plant. It is native to Japan, Taiwan and Northern China, where it likes to grow in sunny places on hills and mountains.



Japanese knotweed. Latin name *Fallopia japonica*

- It is a tall plant growing in dense stands up to 3 metres high.
- The leaves are about 15cm long narrowing at the tip. They are about 8cm wide at the base.



In the Spring the leaves and stems are tinged purple-red.



Sprays of small white flowers appear in the summer.

Japanese knotweed is spreading at a fast rate and is a very serious threat in Ireland. It forms a dense cover, shading out and killing native plants. Japanese knotweed can cause widespread damage resulting in financial loss.



In the winter it looks very different and dies back leaving brown dead stems sticking up.

DO NOT DISTURB

Japanese knotweed spreads quickly, often as a result of moving earth containing pieces of the plant roots or stems. A tiny section of rhizome (a root like underground stem) can produce a new plant. Pieces of fresh stems may also root and grow into a new plant.

It is therefore very important to prevent the movement of earth contaminated with Japanese knotweed rhizomes from one area to another. Builders and anyone involved in moving earth containing pieces of Japanese knotweed should take extreme care.

Where Japanese knotweed is cut during hedge trimming, the stems and rhizomes are often transported on vehicle tyres leading to it spreading along road sides.

There is another knotweed found in Clare; Himalayan knotweed is similar with much narrower leaves.

HOW TO CONTROL THE WEED?

There is no easy method of controlling Japanese knotweed. Any method of control should be undertaken with great care as ineffective control leads to further infestation.

OPTIONS FOR CONTROL

1). Chemical control. This involves the use of herbicide. The herbicide should be approved for use on Japanese knotweed. Herbicide should not be used near ponds, lakes, streams or other water courses. It should be applied only during dry still weather to avoid contamination outside of the area with herbicide. It is best to remove the previous years growth prior to treatment with herbicides. The herbicide should be applied between March and October when the plant is growing and should cover as much of the plant as possible including under the leaves.

A range of herbicides can be used, however those containing glyphosate are regarded as the most effective. Several applications of herbicides will usually be necessary, as it often takes three years to eradicate Japanese knotweed.



Japanese knotweed after treatment

2). Physical control. Pulling up mature stems with the roots over a three year period has been shown to have good results over small areas, however this is very labour intensive. Regular cutting of an area can halt it spreading. For cutting to be effective it needs to be carried out regularly through out the season.

The cut material must be disposed of safely, otherwise this will cause further spreading. Disposal options include drying out or burning. Composting is not an option because it does not kill it.