

New Invaders Watch Program

Early Detection and Rapid Response Network

COMMON NAME: **JAPANESE KNOTWEED**

SCIENTIFIC NAME: *Fallopia japonica*

Synonym: *Polygonum cuspidatum*

FAMILY: *Polygonaceae*

ORIGIN: East Asia

US INTRODUCTION: Introduced in the late 1800's, as an ornamental garden plant and for erosion control

MAJOR PATHWAYS OF SPREAD:

- As a contaminant in fill dirt
- Water
- Wind (rare)

IDENTIFICATION CHARACTERISTICS:

- Perennial herb, but grows to 3 - 9 feet. tall, looks shrub-like, grows in full sun to full shade, spreads vegetatively, may produce seed
- Flowers white-pink, densely crowded on erect to drooping stalks
- Fruits small, winged; seeds triangular, shiny and very small, about 1/10 inch long
- Leaves simple, alternate, 6 inches long by 3 - 4 inches wide, broadly oval to somewhat triangular and pointed at the tip
- Stems and branches reddish-brown, smooth, and swollen at leaf joints
- Threatens riparian corridors, fens, springs. Also grows along roadsides



Leaves on a branch



Flowers



Population

NATIVE LOOK-ALIKES:

Giant knotweed (*P. sachalinense*), **exotic invader**, leaves deeply heart-shaped with rounded basal lobes.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

Japanese knotweed Fact Sheet – Plant Conservation Alliance.
<http://www.nps.gov/plants/alien/fact/faja1.htm>

US Department of Agriculture National Agricultural Library.
<http://www.invasivespeciesinfo.gov/plants/knotweed.shtml>

Japanese knotweed factsheet – Invasive Plant Species Assessment Working Group, Indiana.
http://www.inchesgov/dnr/files/Japanese_Knotweed.pdf