



Japanese Knotweed

(*Fallopia japonica*)

Japanese knotweed tolerates a wide range of conditions, including full shade, high temperatures, high salinity and drought. It can reach heights of 2-3 metres. It's network of rhizomes (roots) make this a difficult plant to eradicate. The rhizome system allows the plant to survive over winter after the leaves die off. It can rejuvenate from tiny pieces of rhizome.

It grows in dense thickets, excluding other plant species. It can grow through tarmac and concrete (if a weakness already exists) and can cause structural damage to buildings and roads.

The leaves are usually heart shaped, with a pale stripe down the middle. The stem is red and green in colour. Japanese knotweed flowers in late summer and produces white or cream coloured flowers. The rhizomes are thick and woody with an orange coloured centre and white root hairs. The seeds of Japanese knotweed are not viable because it spreads by the root system. The principle means of spread of Japanese Knotweed is via fragmentation of stems and rhizomes.

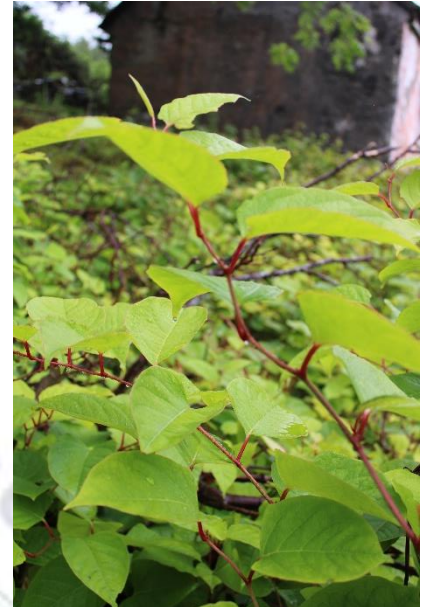
Japanese knotweed thrives on disturbed ground. It can generate a new plant from the tiniest rhizome fragment. Fragmented plants can easily be transported in soil and on vehicles. It is most commonly found on roadsides, waste ground, river banks, hedgerows and railway lines.

The North Connemara Locally Led Agri-Environmental Scheme advise the following when removing Japanese knotweed:

- Do not strim, cut, flail or chip the plants as tiny fragment can regenerate new plants.
- Do not dig out Japanese knotweed as this can cause fragmentation of the rhizomes, creating more plants.



- Do not move or dump soil which may contain plant material as this may also add to its spread.
- Do not compost any part of the plant as it could survive in the compost and regrow when the compost is used.
- Do not spread any soil that has been contaminated with Japanese Knotweed rhizome.



When removing Japanese knotweed chemically, the following steps are recommended:

- The best time to spray is in August or September
- As Knotweed is susceptible to frost, you will need to spray before frost has a chance to kill off the growth
- It takes anywhere from 2 - 6 weeks for the weed killer to take effect
- Remove growth once it has died back
- Spray again to treat missed leaves.
- Several more applications will be necessary to completely kill off the plant & root system
- Monitor for at least 3 years to ensure there is no regrowth
- An application of 20ml of glyphosate per litre of water is recommended for effective control



Foliar application: Chemical such as glyphosate can be applied using a sprayer. It is an effective way to treat large infestations of the weed. Regrowth will occur, and will require follow up treatment in subsequent years. After initial treatment, spot treatment will be required yearly until no further regrowth is observed.

Cut and inject treatment: This treatment requires a higher concentration of the active ingredient than is used in foliar applications. This method is useful where Japanese knotweed is occurring next to a water course in order to avoid chemical runoff into the water. In the case of Japanese knotweed, the stems should be cut approximately 20-30cm from the base of each cane. 10ml of herbicide at a ratio of 5:1 is injected into each stem. Regrowth will occur for a few years. This is to be monitored and spot treated until no further growth is observed.

When disposing of Japanese knotweed: It should not be placed in your compost or recycling bin. The canes can be disposed of at a licensed landfill site for deep burial. The landfill site must be notified that the waste material contains Japanese knotweed.