

Japanese Knotweed

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Species Description

Scientific name: *Fallopia japonica*

AKA: Japanese Bamboo, *Reynoutria japonica*, *Polygonum cuspidatum*

Native to: Japan, Taiwan, northern China

Habitat: Common in urban areas, particularly on waste land, railways, road sides and river banks

Can grow up to 2 – 3 m in height and can dominate an area to the exclusion of most other plants. It can form an extensive network of rhizomes (roots) which cause problems when managing this species. The rhizomes also allow the plant to survive over winter when the over ground conspicuous leafy part of the plant dies back to a brown wasted stem.

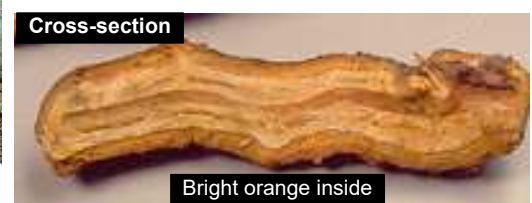
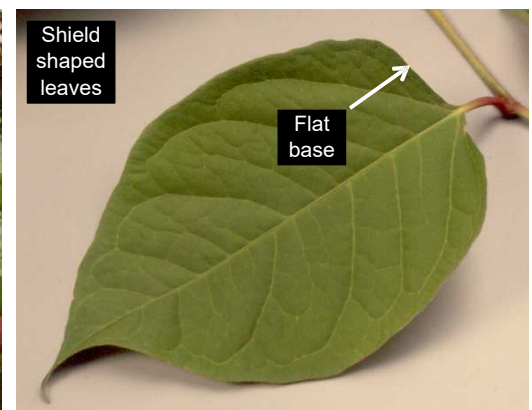
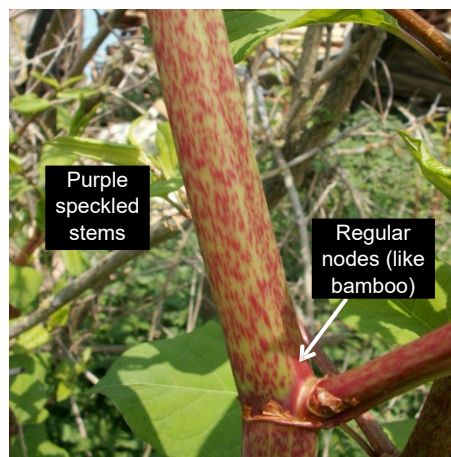
Introduced to Ireland in the mid to late 19th century as an ornamental plant and is now wide-spread throughout Northern Ireland.

Spreads rapidly in the wild by natural means or by humans. Spread is solely by vegetative means, either fragments of rhizome or stem. Negative impacts include outcompeting native flora, contributing to river bank erosion and increasing the likelihood of flooding. This plant has the ability to grow through tarmac and concrete, although only if a weakness already exists and therefore must be cleared completely before starting to build or lay roads.

Japanese knotweed is listed on Schedule 9 of The Wildlife (Northern Ireland) Order 1985 and as such, it is an offence to plant or otherwise allow this species to grow in the wild.



Key ID Features



Report any sightings via; CEDaR Online Recording - <https://www2.habitas.org.uk/records/IS/>, iRecord app or Invasive Species Northern Ireland website - <http://invasivespeciesni.co.uk/report-sighting>

Identification throughout the year

Spring



Summer

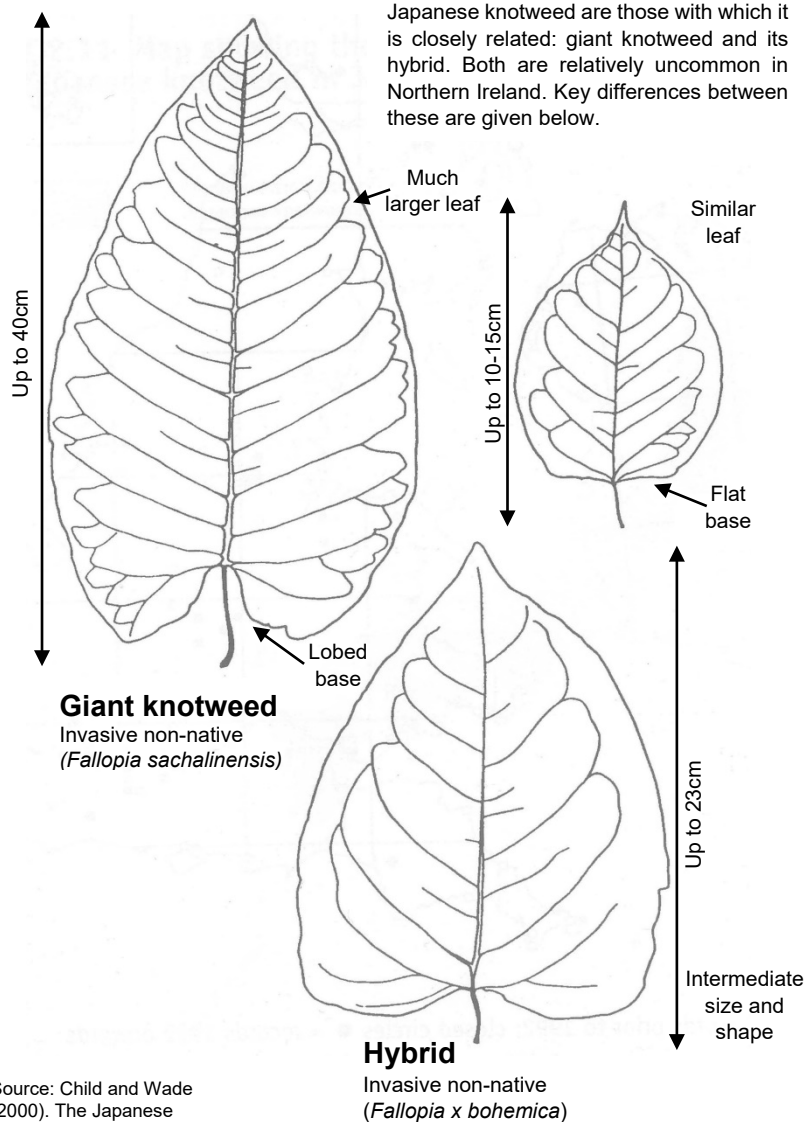


Winter



Similar Species

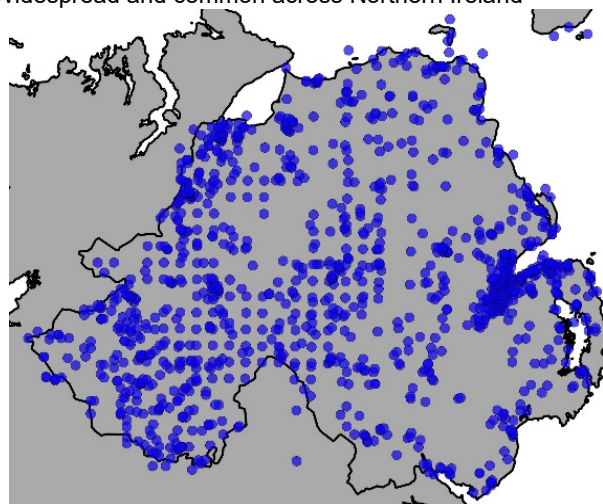
The species most likely to be confused with Japanese knotweed are those with which it is closely related: giant knotweed and its hybrid. Both are relatively uncommon in Northern Ireland. Key differences between these are given below.



Source: Child and Wade (2000). The Japanese Knotweed Manual

Distribution

Widespread and common across Northern Ireland



Source: NBN atlas Northern Ireland

<https://northernireland-species.nbnatlas.org/species/NHMSYS0000458716>

Check website for current distribution

References and further reading:

- Blamey, M, Fitter, R and Fitter, A (2003) "The Wild Flowers of Britain and Ireland. The Complete Guide to the British and Irish Flora." A & C Black
- Child, L E and Wade, P M (2000) "The Japanese Knotweed Manual". Packard
- Environment Agency (2006) "The Japanese Knotweed Code of Practice". Environment Agency Preston, C D, Pearman, D A and Dines, T A (editors) (2002) "New Atlas of the British and Irish Flora". Oxford University Press
- Stace, C (1999) "Field Flora of the British Isles". Cambridge University Press
- Photos from: Olaf Booy, Helen Parish, Max Wade, Vicky White.

Sustainability at the heart of a living, working, active landscape valued by everyone.

Adapted for Northern Ireland
Environment Agency 2020