

# Weed Alert

## Knotweed (*Polygonum spp.*)



### Why is it a problem?

Although Japanese (*Polygonum cuspidatum*) and giant (*Polygonum sachalinense*) knotweed are considered to be attractive garden ornamentals, they are aggressive invaders. When plants are introduced into natural habitats such as streams, riverbeds and other natural areas, they can form dense thickets and displace native species. Infestations can impact amphibians, birds, and other native animals. Once infestations form, they become extremely persistent and difficult to eradicate. These highly invasive non-native species are listed as noxious in many parts of North America.

### Key identifying traits

- Bamboo-like stems growing more than 3 m tall and are swollen at joints where leaves join stem
- Forms dense patches that quickly spread
- Leaves of giant knotweed are large (> 30 cm) and heart-shaped
- Leaves of Japanese knotweed are small (10 cm) and flat at the base with a pointed tip
- Small white flowers bloom in late summer



Knotweed is being spread rapidly throughout the West Kootenay as a garden ornamental. Do your part to protect the environment!

### What can YOU do?!

#### Prevent...

- Learn to identify invasive plants
- Don't plant or transplant these plants to your garden
- Research nursery and catalogue specimens before buying
- Be careful of spreading cuttings or vegetative pieces of this plant through garden waste, dumping, or vehicles

#### Remove...

- Remove or control plants on your property
- Dig up small clumps being careful to remove all plant parts
- Cut large patches down and lay thick black plastic over the infestation to prevent re-sprouting and spread
- For chemical options, obtain expert advice

For more information, contact...

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