

If you have questions about knotweed control, have knotweed on your property and want assistance, aren't sure if you have knotweed, or would like to volunteer, please contact us:

Skagit County Noxious Weed Department

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Grandy Creek roadside before treatment.



Grandy Creek roadside after treatment.



Image of dead knotweed stems. New stems will emerge from persistent root system.



©Michael Wilhelm

Stop the spread of

KNOTWEEDS

Without prompt and vigorous action knotweed will take over entire riverbanks displace native habitat and destroy the scenic and recreational quality of our Natural Areas.

Help Protect Your Natural Areas

This is a modified version of a brochure originally created by The Nature Conservancy. The original printing and distribution of this brochure was made possible by the support of many partners including: the Bureau of Land Management; Metro Parks and Greenspaces Program; the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; the Oregon Department of Agriculture; the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board; and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

What is knotweed?

Japanese, Giant, Bohemian, and Himalayan knotweed are perennial plants native to Asia, but planted in the Pacific Northwest as ornamentals. Common names include Mexican or Japanese bamboo, elephant ear, or fleece flower.

Scientific Names include:

Polygonum cuspidatum, *Polygonum sachalinense*, *Polygonum x bohemicum*, and *Polygonum polystachyum*

These plants have also been placed in the *Fallopia*, *Reynoutria*, and *Persecaria* genera

Why is it a problem?

Knotweed is a particularly aggressive plant because of the ease with which it spreads and the massive root clusters it forms. In the Northwest, knotweed usually spreads when roots and stems are moved by waterways, by floods or in contaminated soil. Root and stem fragments as small as 1 inch can produce a new plant. It poses a significant threat to riparian areas, where it can survive severe floods and is able to rapidly colonize scoured shores and islands.

What can you do?

Check your property and contact your local county weed board or the WSDA knotweed control program.

Avoid spreading knotweed. Small fragments can get into dirt piles and take root or get transported to other areas. When using fill dirt, check the pile to see if there is knotweed nearby or ask your supplier. Never dispose of cuttings in compost or near wetlands, streams, rivers or other wet areas.

If you have knotweed on your property, Knotweed is very difficult to remove by hand and may require repeated cutting or intensive digging. Do not use herbicides near water. It is best to have a professional treat your knotweed with approved herbicides.

Volunteer! Help educate others about knotweed, or offer to help those controlling knotweed in your area.

What does it look like?

Knotweed emerges in the spring, and reaches full height by summer. The knotweeds form dense stands of hollow stems that are green to red and resemble bamboo.

The large leaf can either be egg- or heart-shaped, with a pointed tip. Minute, greenish-white flowers occur in branched sprays in summer. The plant is dormant in the winter, and the dead brown stems may remain standing.

Where does it grow?

Knotweed thrives in moist soil or river cobble, in full or partial sunlight. Most common in the flood zone along rivers and creeks, it also grows on roadsides, abandoned lots, yards, and other upland areas.

How does it spread?

In the Pacific Northwest, knotweed usually spreads when roots are moved by floods, or by people in either yard waste or in soil from construction sites. Root fragments as small as 1/2inch can start new plants. Even one patch can produce hundreds of new plants.

What is being done about knotweed?

Since 2004, WSDA has provided resources to county noxious weed control boards, tribal governments, one state agen-

How can knotweed be controlled?

There are risks associated with controlling knotweed. Even small fragments of cut stems and rhizomes may root and spread plants if not disposed of properly. Native plants, fish and other aquatic life may be damaged if chemicals for spraying knotweed are used improperly. To better understand these risks, contact the county noxious weed board or the WSDA knotweed control program.

Herbicide: The herbicide glyphosate, imazapyr, and triclopyr have been shown to effectively control knotweed over several years. To avoid the difficulties of spraying large plants, cut stems down once in May or June, and allow the plants to regrow to about waist height. Apply the herbicide as directed on the label to the leaves in late summer or fall, before they begin to turn yellow. Repeat this process yearly

cy, and non-governmental organizations for knotweed control projects. This has allowed these groups to control knotweed at no cost to the landowner. Contact WSDA or your county weed board to inquire about projects in your area.



Bamboo-like stems and smooth-edged, heart shaped leaves of knotweed

until the plants no longer sprout. Herbicide stem injection may also be used with properly licensed products. If the knotweed is near water, contact a professional. Misuse of herbicides is prohibited by law. Always Read and follow label directions carefully.

Cutting: Repeatedly cutting the stems may prevent spreading of infestations, but it is extremely difficult to kill the plant completely using this method. Cut the stems at least every two weeks during the growing season to deplete reserves stored in their roots. Make sure you dry the stems completely before disposing of them. They should never be left in or near waterways or composted.