

# JAPANESE KNOTWEED

*Fallopia japonica*

May 2017



## KEY INFORMATION

**Preferred Habitat:** Disturbed areas, anywhere where the fragments of stem/rhizomes are deposited.

### Wandle Distribution:

Croydon    Sutton    Merton    Wandsworth



### Recommended Control: Stem injection

*Other Options: Foliar spraying*

**Biosecurity:** Any bits of JK that snap off during treatment must be bagged and disposed of appropriately. Do not leave fragments lying on the ground, especially below the high water mark.



**Wandle Strategy:** All landowners and management authorities are to be encouraged to implement control of knotweed on their land or on land under their control.

## SPECIES INFORMATION

**Origin:** Japan, introduced to the UK mid-1800s

**Biology:** Fortunately most of the knotweed in the UK does not produce seed. Reproduction is primarily vegetative.

Japanese knotweed is highly invasive due to vigorous rhizomes, which can grow up to 3 m in length per year. A minute section of root or node can regenerate into a new plant. The rhizomes from one plant can extend up to 2 m underground and up to 7 m laterally, forming dense stands of JK above ground.

New JK canes emerge in March and can grow at a rate of 5 to 10 cm per day. By mid-June, the leaves are mature and the plant begins to send nutrients back to the rhizome, building a food reserve over summer ready for the next growing season. Above ground canes die back from October each year.

## IMPACTS ON THE WANDLE

With vigorous growth, Japanese knotweed can easily displace resident native vegetation which plays a key role in the structure and function of freshwater ecosystems.

JK dies back in winter, leaving bare soil exposed. If this soil is washed out, JK can be spread downstream by fragments of the rhizome.

Where large stands of JK persist on the banks of the Wandle, there is an increased sediment input into the river. In slow moving waters, this silt will accumulate and smother the river bed, rendering the habitat unsuitable for fish spawning.

As JK reabsorbs nutrients into the rhizome over the summer, including 75% of the foliar nitrogen, the fallen leaves contribute less nitrogen to riparian soils and the wider aquatic environment than native vegetation.

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## RECOMMENDED CONTROL: STEM INJECTION

- Equipment:** Injecting kit, RoundUp ProVantage 480\*, Tree Marking aerosol.
- Qualifications:** PA6INJ. A herbicide agreement from the Environment Agency (EA) is also required.
- PPE:** Gloves, waders/wellingtons, coveralls and face shield.
- Time of Year:** Mid-June to end of September.

### Method:

Ensure you have Environment Agency consent if using herbicides on the Wandle. EA consent is required if working near/on water or within 1 m of the top of the bank. You will find the **AqHerb 01** form in the Management Plan and guidance on how to complete this.

Inject each stem of Japanese knotweed with **1.5 ml of undiluted RoundUp ProVantage 480**. Mark each cane injected with brightly coloured tree marking aerosol to avoid double treatment.

Ensure all equipment and PPE is cleaned before leaving site to ensure the plant is not spread further.

If any canes grow back, growth is normally stunted (known as bonsai regrowth, pictured right) with canes often thin and hard. Spot foliar spraying is often easier on bonsai growth.

Up to three treatments might be required to stop the plant from growing back when treating with herbicide. Monitoring of treated sites is therefore key.



## OTHER CONTROL OPTIONS

**Foliar Spraying:** For large, inaccessible/awkward stands of Japanese knotweed or bonsai regrowth



Living Wandle  
Landscape Partnership

