

# Giant Knotweed

(*Fallopia sachalinensis*)



## Key ID Features

**Appearance:** Giant knotweed is an herbaceous perennial that is woody in appearance and can grow over 10 feet tall. Root extend deeply into the soil creating a dense impenetrable mat.

**Foliage:** Alternate, simple, dark green. Leaves are 6-14 inches long and have a heart-shaped base coming narrow to a point.

**Flowers:** Numerous small, greenish-white flowers appear in the leaf axils of the upper stems. Giant knotweed blooms have both male and female parts in the same flower.

**Fruits:** Fruits are papery and broadly winged. Each fruit contains a 3-sided achene that is small, shiny and brown. Small amounts of seed are viable and have no dormancy requirement.



## The Impact

Knotweeds are capable of quickly forming dense stands where they can crowd out native vegetation. Thickets can clog small waterways and displace streamside vegetation, increasing bank erosion and lowering the quality of riparian habitat for fish and wildlife. Once established, these stands are very difficult to eradicate.

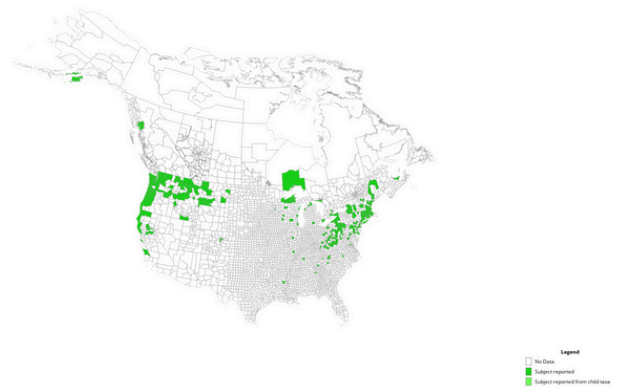
## Quick Facts

**Plant Family:** Buckwheat family (Polygonaceae).

**Habitat:** Forests, forest edges, fields, meadows, disturbed areas, river banks, lake shore.

**Present in Vermont?:** Yes.

**Method of Spread:** Giant knotweed can spread both vegetatively and by seed, though seeds are usually not viable. Rhizomes allow knotweeds to spread quickly and aggressively and new colonies can form from very small stem or rhizome fragments. Plant parts can be moved by natural means, such as waterways, and often through human activities such as moving knotweed plant parts to new location or moving soil contaminated with rhizome fragments.



## Common Look-alike

Japanese knotweed (*Reynoutria japonica*)



Photo by UNH

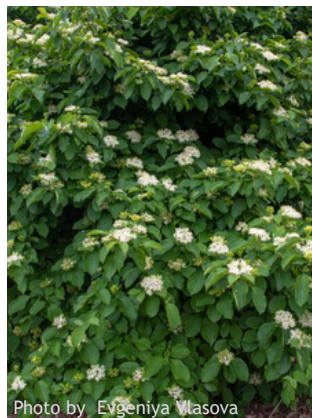
Invasive Japanese knotweed (left) looks like Giant knotweed (right), but has squared off leaf base, where Giant knotweed is more "heart-shaped".

## Native Plant Alternatives



Nannyberry  
(*Viburnum lentago*)

A local beneficial pollinator, produces berries that are important to bird and wildlife diets.



Silky dogwood  
(*Cornus amomum*)

A great wind break landscape plant, provides erosion control and wildlife benefits.

## Control Information

To learn more about identification & control options, check out the Gallery of Land Invasives on [VTinvasives.org](http://VTinvasives.org) and these additional resources:

- [Invasive.org](http://Invasive.org)
- [New Hampshire](http://New Hampshire)
- [MDA](http://MDA)

Scan here for a full profile on Giant Knotweed!!



References: [Washingtonstate.gov](http://Washingtonstate.gov), [InvasiveSpeciescentre](http://InvasiveSpeciescentre), [MTU](http://MTU)