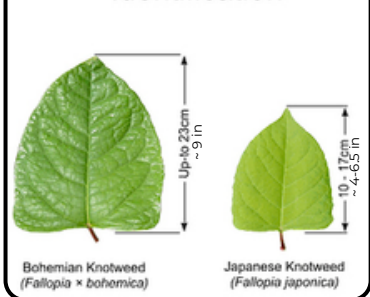


Knotweeds

Fallopia japonica, *Fallopia x bohemica*



Knotweed Leaf Identification



[Further
Information
and
References](#)



Quick Facts: Japanese Knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*) is an invasive, shrub-like perennial and Bohemian Knotweed (*Fallopia x bohemica*) is a more aggressive hybrid between Japanese Knotweed and Giant Knotweed (*Polygonum sachalinense*). These plants closely resemble one another and Bohemian Knotweed is often misidentified as Japanese. Knotweeds thrive in full sun but can survive in part shade. They are adaptable to a variety of soil conditions but thrive in wet or riparian areas. Knotweeds grow and spread quickly in disturbed sites. They contribute to erosion issues in riparian zones and worsen the impacts of flooding. Knotweeds can grow through foundations and sidewalks, causing structural damage. Additionally, the presence of Knotweeds can increase the numbers of Japanese beetles, which are a crop pest throughout the Midwest.

Invasion Strategy: Knotweeds spread quickly via the dispersal of rhizomes and seed. Both the species and the hybrid form dense monocultures with quick growing rhizomes (horizontal, underground stems) and are very successful at excluding native plant species. Rhizomes can be transported by riparian flooding, movement of fill dirt, and by uncleaned mower decks.

Identifying Features:

Both species have the following characteristics:

- Leaves have an alternate arrangement on the stem.
- Stems are red-brown in color. Stems resemble bamboo with their hollow, segmented stems with swollen nodes.
- Flowers are small, white, and arranged in drooping clusters or spikes near the end of the stems.
- Fruits are small and winged. Seeds are very small, dark, and triangular.

Japanese knotweed can be identified by the following characteristics:

- Stems can grow more than 10 feet tall.
- Leaves are green and broad with a pointed tip. Leaves are 6 inches long and 4 inches wide and are flat at the base.

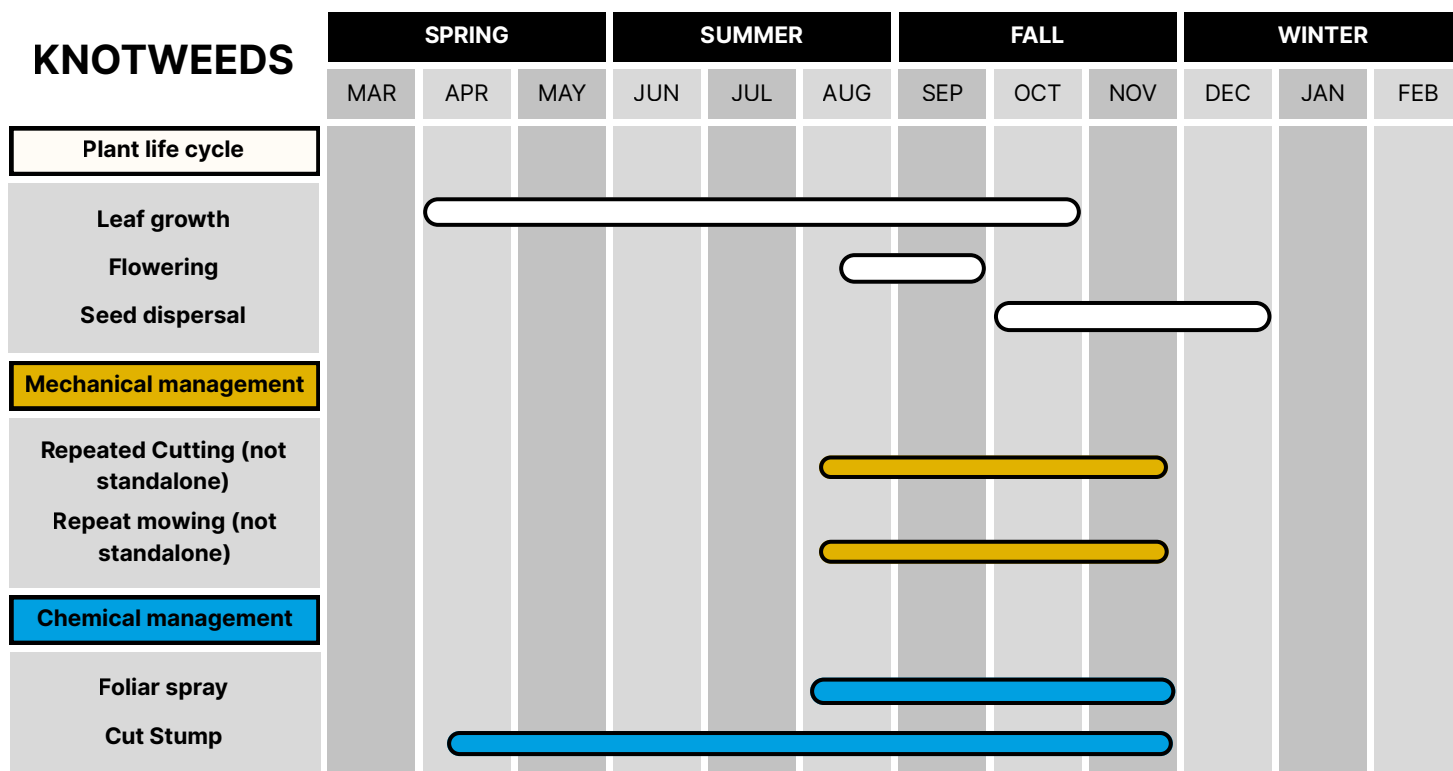
Bohemian knotweed can be identified by the following characteristics:

- Stems can grow as tall as 16.5 feet.
- Leaves are also green and broad with a pointed tip but can occasionally be more heart shaped like giant knotweed. Leaves can be anywhere from 4 – 8 inches long and more than 4 inches wide.

Japanese and Bohemian Knotweed both closely resemble giant knotweed. Giant Knotweed is much taller and has larger leaves than both species.

Knotweeds

Fallopia japonica, Fallopia x bohemica



This chart is based on USDA plant hardiness zone 6. Plant growth and treatment times vary by region.

Management methods:

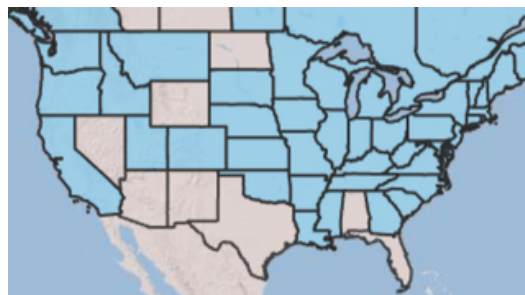
Mechanical - Repetitive cutting and mowing throughout the growing season have reduced knotweed numbers when paired with chemical control. Digging is not recommended as all rhizome pieces must be removed / killed. Mechanical removal alone is not effective at removing knotweed, and in some cases, it can cause resprouting and spreading.

Chemical - Foliar application is the most effective control method for large populations of knotweed. Cut stump treatments can be utilized in small infestations but are very labor-intensive. Repeat applications of either method are required.

Disclaimer - Selecting the best management method for this plant can be site and context-specific. Check with your local USDA Service Center or University Extension agent to explore your options and determine what is most appropriate for your location and situation.

Management information: Dispose of cut plant materials where they cannot resprout. If seeds are present, bag them and dispose of them in a landfill. Equipment should be cleaned after management.

Personal protective equipment is recommended when removing any invasive species, and especially when using herbicides. Always follow label instructions when using herbicide.



■ Species present

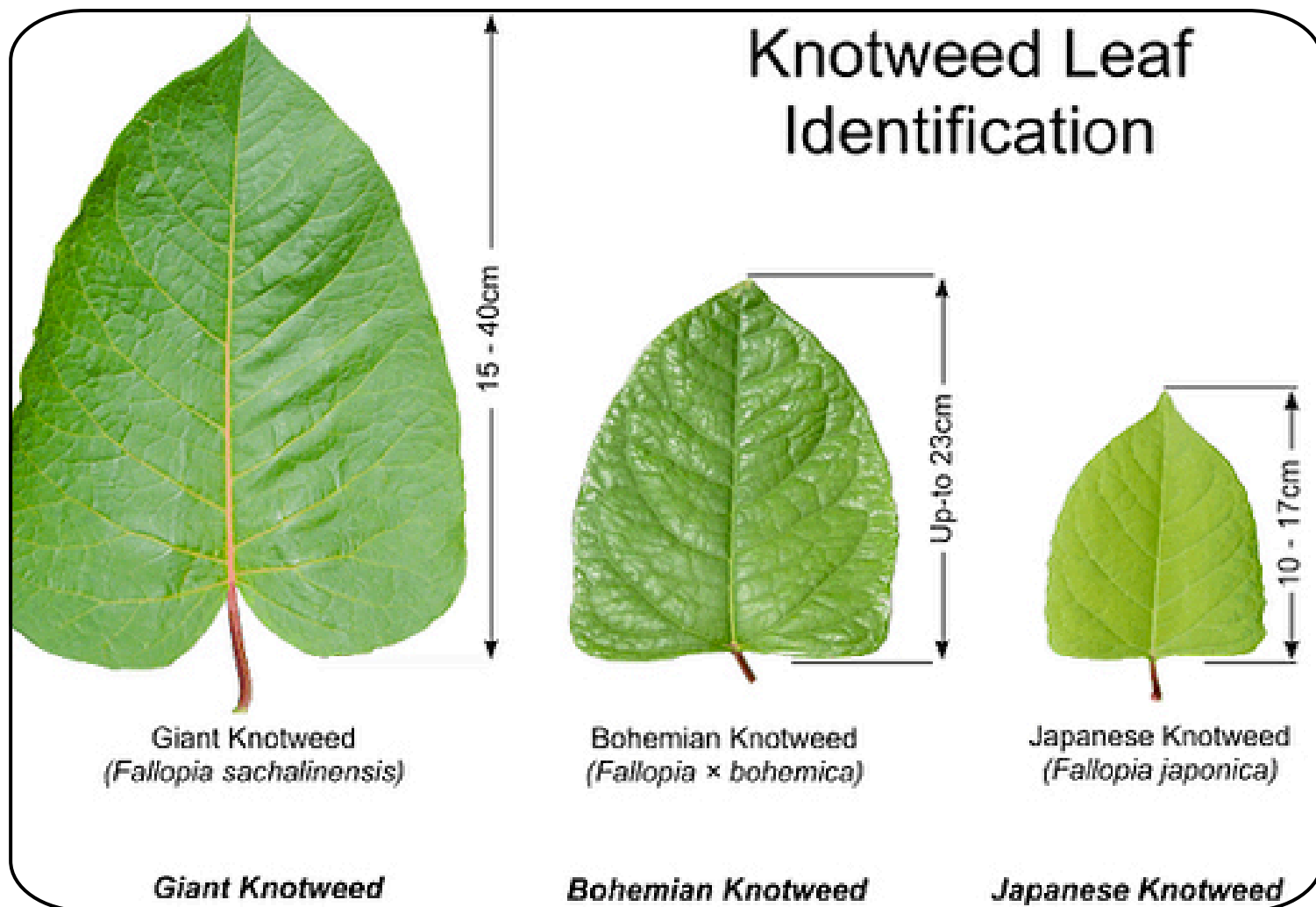
■ Absent

Midwest Invasive Plant Fact Sheet #8 – References and Supplemental Information

Knotweeds *Fallopia japonica*, *Fallopia x bohemica*

Look-Alike Species:

- Giant Knotweed, *Fallopia sachalinensis*
- As mentioned above, Giant Knotweed, Japanese Knotweed, and Bohemian Knotweed are invasive and frequently misidentified (supplemental photo 1). Giant Knotweed grows much taller than the other two species and has larger leaves. The leaves also have hair on their undersides while leaf hairs on other species aren't as visible. Regardless of which knotweed species is present, the treatment methods are the same.



Midwest Invasive Plant Fact Sheet #8 – References and Supplemental Information

Knotweeds *Fallopia japonica*, *Fallopia x bohemica*

References and Additional Reading:

- Plant Conservation Alliance's Alien Plant Working Group. 2005. [Fact Sheet: Japanese Knotweed](#). [Identification, mechanical, and chemical control information].
- Invasive Species Center – Canada. 2025. [Bohemian Knotweed](#). [Identification information].
- Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. 2026. [Non-native knotweeds: Japanese, Bohemian, and Giant knotweed \(*Polygonum cuspidatum*, *P. x bohemicum*, and *P. sachalinense*\)](#). [Identification information].
- Ohio Invasive Plant Council. 2010. [Invasive Plants of Ohio - Japanese Knotweed](#). [Identification, mechanical, and chemical control information].
- Michigan Department of Natural Resources. 2012. [Japanese Knotweed](#). [Identification, mechanical, and chemical control information].
- Ecosphere - An ESA Open Access Journal. Johnson et al. 2019. [Novel plant–insect interactions in an urban environment: enemies, protectors, and pollinators of invasive knotweeds](#). [Pest information].

Photo Credits: Photo 1: iNaturalist, Rachel Stringham; Photo 2: The Knotweed Killers, Sharon L. Gillies; Photo 3: iNaturalist, angieseltzer; Photo 4: iNaturalist, Jerry Cannon; Range map: USDA PLANTS database; Supplemental photo 1: The Knotweed Killers.

Resources:

- Find your local [University Extension Program](#)
- Find your local [USDA NRCS Service Center](#)
- Find your local [Soil and Water Conservation District](#)
- Check out other invasive plant fact sheets
- Check out Pollinator Partnership's agriculture page

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