

## Japanese Knotweed (*Polygonum cuspidatum*)



### Key Identifiers:

- Shrublike herbaceous perennial
- Leave size varies, broadly oval to somewhat triangular and pointed at the tip
- Stems are smooth, stout and swollen at the joints where the leaf meets the stem
- Clusters of greenish-white flowers bloom at leaf axils during August and September
- Fruits are small, brown and triangular

### Habitat:

- Japanese knotweed can tolerate a variety of adverse conditions including full shade and flooding
- Often found near water, in waste areas, utility corridors and old home sites

### Methods of reproduction and dispersal:

- Spreads primarily by vegetative means with the help of it's long, stout rhizomes and also by seed
- The extensive underground rhizome system sustains the plant even when top growth is removed
- Spreads quickly and forms dense thickets
- Any portion of root system will resprout

### Management Approaches:

- Grubbing is appropriate for small populations or in environmentally sensitive areas.
- The entire plant and root structure must be removed and should be bagged and disposed of
- Any portion of the root system not removed will potentially resprout
- Repeated cutting may be effective though it must be carried out for several years. Cutting of stems results in a significant reduction of rhizomatous reserves
- After cutting in late June, Glyphosate treatments in late summer or early fall are more effective in preventing regrowth
- In established stands, glyphosate treatments should weaken plant and prevent it from dominating a site

Sources: Tom Remaley, Great Smoky Mountain National Park, Gatlinburg, TN  
Univ. of Connecticut Horticulture Dept. website

