



## JAPANESE KNOTWEED: HELP STOP THE SPREAD

Japanese Knotweed out-competes native plants for food and water. It creates dense shade that eliminates other plant growth. Aggressive growth allows it to form monocultures which degrades wildlife habitat and reduces biodiversity. Thick layers of leaf litter prevents native seeds from germinating. Growth along waterways eliminates native plants, causing soil erosion. Japanese Knotweed is hard to eradicate because its rhizomes spread aggressively. Rhizomes can grow through asphalt and concrete walls. It has no natural controls such as disease or insect pests.

### VICTORIA PARK - A PILOT PROJECT

Japanese Knotweed was identified at Victoria Park, likely introduced through yard waste. Small patches were pulled weekly and larger patches were covered with tarps, 8 inches of soil, seeded with grass and mowed weekly. The goal was to "starve" the root system by preventing photosynthesis so the plants would eventually die. The Knotweed patch stopped growing and the project was successful.

### WHAT CAN ISLANDERS DO?

- Don't plant it.
- Mow/ pull it consistently.
- Cover the plants with things like tarps or old carpet. Knotweed does not like dense shade.

### INFORMATION GUIDE

**Scientific Name:** Fallopia japonica, Reynoutria japonica, Polygonum cuspidatum

**Family:** Buckwheat family

**Origin:** Japan, China and some places in Korea and Taiwan.

**Growth Habitat:** Herbaceous perennial plant, under most conditions can reach over 1-3m in height.

**Leaves:** Alternate, heart shaped, 5-12cm wide; leaf veins can be reddish.

**Stems:** Long; hollow, jointed green to reddish colour.

**Flowers:** Most North American plants have female flowers only, which, bloom in late summer; flowers are small, white-cream colour and grow in long clusters that are 4-5 inches long.

**Fruit/seed:** Small, three winged structure with a dark brown triangular seed; North American plants do not reproduce by seeds.

**Reproduction:** Mainly by underground stems, called rhizomes, that can reach 20m horizontally; rhizome fragments can reproduce into a cloned part.

**Habitat:** Like moist, sunny locations; tolerates a wide range of habitats from wetlands to woodland edges, old fields, ditches, urban properties and backyards.

