

Japanese Knotweed

Fallopian japonica

Region of Origin: East Asia
Habitat: Perennial, deciduous, sub-shrub
Current Range: Asia, North America (39 States) & Europe
Flowering Season: Summer



Japanese knotweed has astounding regenerative prowess and the capacity to spread at lightning speed, especially near streams and roadsides. It is a rapidly growing, perennial plant with characteristic purple spots on the stem. The tubular structure of the stem allows even tiny pieces of knotweed to float through waterways and readily access new habitats to colonize along its journey. The dense root and leaf structure of knotweed stands make it nearly impossible for other plants to compete, and it is considered one of the world's most destructive invasive species. The strong scent of the lacy white blooms attract bees. And, many humans are attracted to its shoots, foraging them for their wonderful rhubarb taste. Avoid sites actively managed with herbicides, and be sure to collect the shoots when they are young and tender – no more than 8 inches tall.

A special thank you to author and ecologist Corinne Duncan for her content contributions to the Japanese Knotweed Introduction.

Japanese Knotweed Vodka

Recipe by Andy Hamilton as published in [The Guardian](#)

450 g Knotweed Shoots (16 oz - 2½ cups)
 750 ml Vodka (3¼ cups)
 225 g Sugar (1 cup)

- Gather knotweed shoots and chop into 3cm pieces, then put into a 1 litre jar.
- Add the sugar and vodka and seal. Shake well and leave for at least 3 - 4 weeks.
- Strain back into bottle through muslin/cheesecloth and place in a cool dark place for 3 months.

The discarded knotweed can be eaten and, as it tastes remarkably like rhubarb, works well in a crumble – simply follow the recipe for a rhubarb crumble replacing knotweed for rhubarb, weight for weight.



Photo by Roy Hunt