

JAPANESE KNOTWEED IDENTIFICATION

- Japanese knotweed is a robust, herbaceous perennial plant with hollow, bamboo-like stems. It forms yellow cream flowers in late June or August. Its leaves are approximately the size of a human hand. Its hollow bamboo-like stems are green with red spots during summer, which turn brown during winter. It forms red side shoots off the main stem and its leaves are arranged in a zig-zag pattern.
- The plant is frost-sensitive and dies back in winter though the stems remain standing.
- *Fallopia japonica* grows from 120–300cm in height with leaves 7–12cm long with a square-cut base, while *Fallopia sachalinensis* grows from 150–300cm in height and has cordate (i.e. notched or indented at the base) leaves up to 30cm in length.
- A hybrid between the two species occurs which has increased vigour and produces even larger leaves. The root system is extremely extensive (extending 15 to 20m in length) and acts as a storage organ allowing for rapid growth in spring.
- The plant requires high light levels and the burst of growth in spring prevents other plants from outshading it.

