

PNW IPC Invasive Plant Focus for February and March 2008



Botanical Name – *Polygonum cuspidatum* (Siebold & Zucc.)
Fallopia japonica

Common Name – Japanese knotweed, Mexican Bamboo

Family – Polygonaceae

Duration/ growth form – Perennial, subshrub, herb/forb

Native Range – Japan, Eastern Asia

Description – Stems are stout, hollow, bamboo like, swollen at the joints, typically 1-3 meters tall. Leaves are thick, 5-15cm long by 5-12cm wide. Flowers- small, ~3mm, greenish or pinkish white, dense axillary panicles. Fruits - an achene, shiny, brown-black, 3 sided.

Threats – Japanese knotweed populations expand rapidly, forming dense thickets, displacing native species reducing species diversity, impacting wildlife habitat. This species typically invades riparian areas, and can cause flooding. It is found within the PNW IPC region, except for the Yukon province, as well as throughout other states in the west, midwest and east coast. It is prohibited or noxious weed in eight states.

Background – Japanese knotweed was introduced as an ornamental to the UK in 1825 and to North America later in the nineteenth century.

Biology – *Fallopia japonica* is a dioecious plant (has male and female plants), primarily reproducing by rhizomes as long as 15-20 meters in length. Dispersal is typically via rhizome fragments in water or soil deposition such as fill dirt, regeneration can occur from small pieces of rhizomes. Plants flower in July through October and any seed production in North America is atypical as fertile male plants are very rare. One can see shoots beginning to appear around April. Growth rates have been observed as being over eight cm per day.

Take a look at the Plant Assessment Form –

<http://www.cal-ipc.org/ip/inventory/PAF/Polygonum%20cuspidatum.pdf>

Other links for *Polygonum cuspidatum* L. (Japanese knotweed)

<http://www.nps.gov/plants/alien/fact/pocu1.htm>

<http://dnr.metrokc.gov/wlr/LANDS/Weeds/japan.htm>

<http://tncweeds.ucdavis.edu/esadocs/polycusp.html>

<http://www.ecy.wa.gov/Programs/wq/plants/weeds/aqua015.html>

References Link