

If you go down to the woods today....

Japanese Knotweed

You may have heard of the Japanese knotweed. It has been around for a number of years but has now become an invasive plant and it is starting to thrive in our local woods. This is what it looks like in May.



And by June it will have grown to 3 metres high; in other words it grows very fast and gets very big. By December, it dies back and seems to be harmless.

The trouble with this sort of Knotweed is that it has a solid mass of roots that are still viable the next year and so the plant spreads impressively. And this root system is so solid that it stops other local native plants from thriving. So the Knotweed spreads and in doing so kills our native plants.

The plant is often to be found where there has been building work and where the soil has been disturbed. But this is not necessarily the only type of site where it grows.

Why do we need to know about this?

- 1 The Knotweed suppresses local native plant growth
- 2 The Knotweed grows to such proportions that it can clog rivers and streams to such an extent that they may flood
- 3 The Knotweed releases harmful nutrients into streams

What you can do

You should not touch the plant or move the soil where the plant is growing. Just leave it alone.

But it is important that the authorities are informed of anywhere it is growing. If you find any Knotweed, you should tell the parks department at your local council. Tell them what you have seen and where you have seen it. Take a photo too since that will help identify it.

The authorities will then do their best to eradicate it. This involves spraying the plants with herbicide and the spraying is usually undertaken in June. Because of the nature of the plant it may take several years before the plant is eradicated from one site.

You can find out more information about the Japanese Knotweed and other invasive plants on the Government website www.gov.uk and search for japanese-knotweed or go to www.cabi.org/japaneseknotweedalliance



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