

Fallopia japonica

Japanese Knotweed,
Bamboo

Invasive to Maine

Upland
Forests, Fields, and Developed Areas

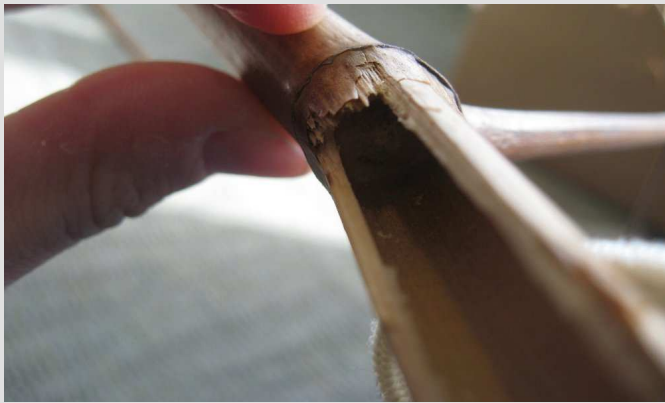
Leaves



Sarah Kim, GMRI



In winter, look for bare stems that form a zig zag pattern along their length. Knotweed loses its leaves in late fall, but a few dead leaves may still be present.



Sarah Morrisseau, GMRI



Plant



Sarah Kim, GMRI



Look for a dense stand of stems that grow up to 3 m tall. Leaves have fallen away but the stems remain. Stems may be broken or bent.

Stem



Sarah Kim, GMRI



Look for bamboo-like stems with noticeable joints and purple specks. The rhizomes (underground horizontal roots) are orangish-yellow under their dark bark.

Seasonal Change



Sarah Morrisseau, GMRI



Knotweed stems die and turn brown in late fall. The dried stems remain into the following season. Seeds remain on the stems into spring.

Similar Species

Knotweed is often compared to bamboo for its jointed, hollow stems. The plant was imported to stabilize riverbanks and as an ornamental shrub for gardens. Its distinctive stems identify it from native shrubs.

Fun Fact

The seeds of Japanese knotweed are edible. They can be roasted and ground to make a nutritious forest food for winter survival.

Researched and created by: Sue Donaldson

Help us improve this species card! Contact us with your updates.