

Japanese knotweed was first introduced to the UK in the 1800s as an ornamental garden plant. Since then has spread rapidly, causing devastating destruction of both natural and manmade environments. The plant outcompetes native plants and can contribute to riverbank erosion increasing the risk of flooding. It is extremely difficult to eradicate and can cause structural damage to roads and houses. It can be found almost anywhere but is common on waste ground and along railway lines, riverbanks, and road verges. The Loch Lomond Fisheries Trust is treating this invasive plant as part of our Endrick Legacy Project: Biodiversity Challenge Fund by Nature.Scot

Japanese knotweed spreads rapidly in the wild because fragments of rhizome or stem break off and regenerate. It does not spread by seed due to only the female plants being present in the UK but it can be pollinated by other knotweed species and hybrids. The fragments can then be accidentally spread further by cutting the plant or disturbing the soil.

Japanese knotweed has been identified in a number of locations near to Fintry and Balfroon. The likely source has been from fly-tipping and if un-noticed it could have spread much further. All known stands have been treated but it is highly likely that there is more in the area. It can be identified in early Spring when it looks like asparagus, but its growth is very quick and often grows into dense thickets by early summer. The plant matures and flowers during late August and September. Although the plant is not harmful to humans or animals, because it is an herbaceous perennial plant, it dies back in the winter and due to its ability to crowd out other plants this can subsequently lead to bank erosion.



The most likely way to identify the plant is to look out for the dark brown woody bamboo-like canes. Some small knotweed stands, or saplings, that are still presenting green leaves and can be treated. Look out for its bamboo like zig-zagged stems with long leaves growing alternately along the stem. The leaves are also shield-heart shaped with a flat base and are a bright green colouration. The main stem of the plant is hollow with nodes along the stem and is usually purple speckled.

The roots of the plant form the crown which grow into large woody blocks over several years of growth. The root system and rhizome of the plant extends deep underground. When the rhizome is disturbed, very small fragments can spread and regrow elsewhere which makes knotweed treatment a very difficult task.

Photographs of Japanese knotweed plants are attached to aid in the identification process.



If you think that you have seen Japanese knotweed growing, either on your property, or in an area that you frequent, such as off a country path, please contact your local community council who will pass on this information to us. Alternatively you can contact Loch Lomond Fisheries Trust direct through our Facebook page at [@LochLomondFisheriesTrust](#)



Early identification and contacting a specialist to provide effective treatment is vital to prevent the spread of the plant and it getting out of control. If you come across signs of Japanese knotweed or you have any knotweed concerns about the Endrick catchment, please get in touch with us at l.lomondfisheritrust@gmail.com.