



Japanese Knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*)

The **World Conservation Union** considers Japanese Knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*) to be one of the world's worst invasive species because it is extremely difficult to remove.

- Your control efforts should focus on preventing the spread of this invasive species. **Focus on edges first, reversing the invasion front.**
- When removing any invasive plant, NEVER dump them anywhere other than garbage or in designated soil treatment areas at landfills. Special care needs to be taken when the homeowner lives in an area where garbage is dumped in a local bin. Please consult your municipality if in doubt.
- Any plants removed should be kept in heavy, dark garbage bags.
- Property lines: Removal along a fence or property line can only be effective if neighbours work together. Barriers will not be enough to stop the spread of JKW.
- Tenants: If you are renting a property, ask your landlord to remove the JKW as it will continue to spread and in so doing, devalue the property.
- Soil: Take care when sharing any plants from the area in your garden that has JKW in case you inadvertently spread the plant to the gardens of friends or neighbours.
- Replant the area with plants as soon as you're sure the area is free of JKW. This will stop other invasive plants from taking hold. Replanting with native plants is highly recommended.

How you decide to remove the JKW will depend on the extent of the infestation and your physical ability to deal with it. You will likely need a five-year plan and will have to inspect the area regularly, adjusting strategies according to your progress. Here are some options:

1. **Digging & Removal** (for smaller infestations/less established plants)

- Most effective when the soil is moist, after a rain, especially in clay soils.
- Dig out and remove entire plants including all roots and shoots. Store plants in heavy, dark garbage bags while awaiting disposal in garbage.
- Be aware the digging out plants may promote growth of roots further out along edges.
- Monitor garden area regularly—at least once a week or more.
- Dig out any shoots (usually red tipped) as they re-appear and remove, including all parts of the plant including roots.
- Repeat inspection and removal **REGULARLY** until there are no shoots for about a year.
- Continue to monitor the area even after the plant is eradicated.
- This process will likely take 5 years or more with **vigilant** monitoring.

2. **Tarping/Solarizing** (for large infestations/established plants)

- Spring is an optimal time to start this process.
- In sunny areas, clear plastic works best.
- Cut the JKW as low to the ground as possible. A sharp spade can be used to cut shoots just below ground level.
- Water the area thoroughly if using clear plastic. (Not required when using tarps/heavy black plastic).
- Cover area with a solid sheet of CLEAR plastic or heavy tarp. Clear plastic works to “cook” the plants but other materials have proven effective too. Clear polyethylene sheets or rolls are available from places like Lowes or Home Depot. If using several tarps/sheets, overlay them generously so you don’t leave gaps where plants can escape. Tarp/cover further out than the infestation as the rhizomes will spread outward to find light.
- Weigh the plastic or tarp to keep in place, e.g. rocks, branches, bricks, tent pegs.
- Tarps should be left looser to allow the JKW to grow without piercing through.
- This strategy works best when plants are in full sun to generate the high temperatures needed to cook both the plant and any seeds.
- Tarps or plastic sheets may need to be in place for 3 growing seasons or more.
- Roots of established plants can be quite deep and woody and may take much longer to kill. Because of these deep roots, JKW may also reappear along the edges of the tarping.
- See link about “Solarizing” below for more information

3. **Mowing and cutting in tandem with herbicides**

- Can be effective but you still must be vigilant
- Herbicides may be warranted where there is a danger to public health or harm to the environment or economy, e.g. poison ivy, JKW
- The best time for chemical control is late May followed by another in early summer. Additional spraying/injection may be needed.
- Request written permission to use a pesticide from your Regional Director or a Branch Director from the Ministry of Natural Resources.
- Contact info for local OMNR district director:
<https://www.ontario.ca/page/ministry-natural-resources-and-forestry-regional-and-district-offices>
- Contact the Ontario Ministry of the Environment and or your local municipality for permissions and advice. General Inquiry number for your area contact: 1-800-667-1940 or 1-800-387-7011

4. **Complete excavation**

- Effective, but is a lot of work and can be costly.

- Contaminated soil and plants must be carefully disposed of in garbage designated soil treatment areas at landfills.

5. Hire a licensed professional

References

- How to Solarize Invasive Plants
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- JKW Best Management Practices in Ontario prepared by the Ontario Invasive Species Council: https://www.ontarioinvasiveplants.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/OIPC_BMP_JapaneseKnotweed.pdf
- Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry regional and district offices
<https://www.ontario.ca/page/ministry-natural-resources-and-forestry-regional-and-district-offices>
- HOW TO FIGHT PLANTS WITH PLANTS <https://www.humanegardener.com/how-to-fight-plants-with-plants/>
- Cut and inject herbicide control of Japanese knotweed Fallopia japonica in Cornwall, England <file:///C:/Users/User/Downloads/PDF33.pdf>
- Japanese Knotweed Removal by Herbicide Injection
<https://www.thespruce.com/japanese-knotweed-removal-by-herbicide-injection-2132942>
- Controlling and Disposing of Non-native and Invasive Species
<https://www.ontarioparks.com/documents/content/10/172>