



Northwoods Cooperative Weed Management Area

Working together to protect the northwoods of Wisconsin from the impacts of invasive species

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Giant Knotweed in Northern Wisconsin

By Colleen Matula, WDNR Forest Ecologist/Silviculturist

What is Giant Knotweed and what is the problem?

Giant knotweed (*Polygonum sachalinense* F. Schmidt ex Maxim.), an herbaceous perennial, is the largest of three related knotweeds (Giant, Japanese and Bohemian) found in North America occurring in the Northwestern US, as far north as Newfoundland, and south to Louisiana. According to the Wisconsin Herbarium range map, giant knotweed is found in only 3 Wisconsin counties – Bayfield, Taylor and La Crosse. Giant knotweed's native range is Sakhalin Island in northern Japan and was imported as an ornamental. In North America, these imported knotweeds are not held in check by natural enemies and are capable of thriving and spreading in a wide range of conditions, especially riverbanks, roadsides, and other moist, disturbed areas. Knotweed infestations can also reduce the property value especially when control is necessary. Roots can spread horizontally and compromise the structure of buildings. Containment and control of the three knotweeds is highly challenging but very important in order to protect un-infested areas from the damage caused by this group of plants.

What does it look like?

Giant knotweed is the biggest of the three invasive knotweeds, with **stems** usually between 6 and 16 feet, but reaching as much as 17 feet tall in some areas. The semi-woody stems are erect, smooth, hollow and light green, resembling the canes of

bamboo, and sparingly branched. The **leaves** are 6 to 16" long, with a deeply heart-shaped base and a blunt leaf tip. Diagnostic **hairs on the leaf underside** are long, thin and wavy, and are best seen with a hand lens during June through mid-September. Japanese knotweed typically has a squared off base and short, less distinctive hairs. The **flowers** are small, creamy white to greenish white, and grow in short, branched clusters from leaf axils near the ends of the stems. **Flower clusters** are generally shorter than the subtending leaf and have both male and female parts on the flower (monocious), unlike the longer and separate gender flower clusters (dicious) of Japanese and Bohemian knotweed. Leaf and flower characters are most reliable for identification purposes.

What is its Legal status in Wisconsin?

Giant knotweed is listed as prohibited by Wisconsin's NR 40 Invasive Species Classification and Control Rule. It is prohibited to possess, transport, and distribute plants or plant parts of this species. The goal is to contain and control prohibited species such as giant knotweed. When found, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) should be contacted at 608-267-5066. For further identification, please collect a complete specimen (leaf with stem and flowers if possible) and contact the WDNR for further confirmation. Questions about this species can be



directed to the NCWMA also.

What Control methods are used?

Manual/mechanical and chemical methods are used to control this species. The plants are more susceptible to herbicides such as aminopyralid, imazapar, glyphosate, or triclopyr using either foliar or cut-stump treatment. However, the most effective treatment regime used recently in Bayfield County is Milestone (aminopyralid) herbicide foliar application during the flowering period (August). The plant is most vulnerable during this period because it is expending all energy into flowering. The NCWMA has had good success with this application.

Here is more information through the following websites:

- <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/Invasives/fact/GiantKnotweed.html>
- <http://clean-water.uwex.edu/pubs/pdf/knotweed.pdf>
- http://na.fs.fed.us/fhp/invasive_plants/weeds/giant-knotweed.pdf
- <http://www.kingcounty.gov/environment/animalsAndPlants/noxious-weeds/weed-identification/invasive-knotweeds/giant-knotweed.aspx>



Community Reaches Out for Knotweed Control

By Jane Swenson



Japanese and giant knotweed continues to appear all over Bayfield County. It does seem that so far, this invasive tends to be localized in the communities of Bayfield, Washburn, and Iron River. A small group of 3-5 volunteers from the NCWMA has been targeting this invasive for the past several years. Control and management of knotweed is slow and sometimes frustrating. Every year, we continue to learn of new sites. You would think that most of the new sites were reported

from cooperating agencies more familiar with invasives, but this was not the case with knotweed. Ironically, most of the reports were received by word of mouth from neighbors. This is the most rewarding part of the job, the ultimate goal of our weed coop - getting the word out to the community.

When requesting permission from a landowner to treat knotweed on their property, the usual response was a resounding “yes!” Most everyone hates this noxious weed because of its pervasive nature. The best way to track its spread was to ask the owners where or who they got the plant from. The answer most likely would lead to several other locations which took the team to a variety of sites, sometimes even to other parts of the county. Several leads came from lake association meetings, farm markets, and articles in online newsletters.

It’s not unusual to get calls in the evening from others who had heard about it from neighbors. In one case town workers led us to a number of sites they knew about which were scattered around town, places we would never have found ourselves. When we were onsite treating knotweed, it was quite common to be approached by several curious people wondering what we were doing. The best part about this network is that all of these neighbors will now be on the lookout for knotweed and know who to contact if they find it.

Giant knotweed is a prohibited species now confirmed in a couple sites in Bayfield county. If you find a new site, please report it right away to the NCWMA or the WDNR.



The above map depicts in green the counties in Wisconsin where Japanese knotweed has been reported (as of July 2011). Both vouchered and unvouchered reports included.





Invasive Species Management in the Winter

You may think that the winter months mean a lack of invasive species control, but there are still opportunities to identify, treat, and control invasive plants.

Woody species like buckthorn and honeysuckle are great to target in the fall and winter, as non-target plants are not affected. Dead foliage from herbaceous species like non-native cattails, common reed grass, and Japanese plume grass can be removed this time of the year by cutting or prescribed burning by professionals. This form of control ultimately increases the effectiveness of next season's foliar applications by reducing the amount of dead standing vegetation that can waste herbicide through absorption during application. Some species, such as garlic mustard and dame's rocket, can be identified in the winter via their seed heads and green vegetation. This allows you to scout out locations for treatment the following spring.

Please take the initiative to control invasives on your property this winter. Remember that the NCWMA has a tool shed with tools and gear available for free public rental.

This winter the NCWMA will be out cutting and treating buckthorn and honeysuckle at Prentice Park in Ashland. If you are interested in getting involved, please contact the NCWMA Coordinator.



Paul Drobot, www.plantstockimages.com

You can still find some buckthorn leaves and berries this time of year.



NCWMA tool shed.



Paul Drobot, www.plantstockimages.com

Garlic mustard basal rosettes.





Native Plant Sale



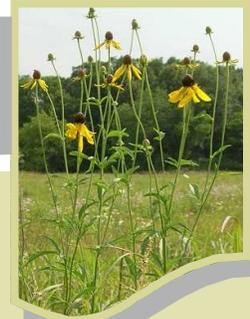
Are you looking for plants that are hardy, largely disease and pest resistant, easy to take care of, and beautiful? Then be sure to order from the 2013 native plant sale!

The Iron and Ashland County Land and Water Conservation Departments sponsor an annual plant sale with April, May, and June pick-up locations in Ashland, Bayfield, and Iron Counties. The deadline to order is February 22, 2013.

The plants offered through this sale are raised from local seed which supports area nurseries and ensures greater survival because they are adapted to our climate. These plants will successfully help you to enhance your yard and minimize maintenance by replacing areas of lawn, in addition to a number of environmental benefits.

Native trees, shrubs, and groundcovers have excellent conservation values because once established, they do not require fertilizer and can usually survive on rainwater alone. These plants are very hardy, resistant to most pests and diseases, and do not require irrigation or fertilization once established. They provide essential habitat for fish and wildlife, and deep root structures help reduce soil erosion which encourages water to permeate the soil. Many also help to enrich the soil.

The natural balance between plants, animals, and microorganisms keeps each species in check, allowing natives to thrive in conditions where they are suited, but preventing them from invasive qualities. Whether you live on the water, in the woods, or in town, consider using native plants to help slow runoff and take up nutrients to help protect water quality!



For more information about the native plant sale and order forms, see the website www.ironcountylcd.org or <http://ashlandcountylwcd.yolasite.com> or contact one of the following:



Heather Palmquist
Iron County LWCD
607 3rd Ave. N.
Hurley, WI 54534
(715) 561-2234
lakes@ironcountywi.org

Tom Fratt
Ashland County LWCD
315 Sanborn Ave., Suite 100
Ashland, WI 54806
(715) 682-7187
tfratt@centurytel.net



Remember Our Call For Projects!

The Northwoods CWMA hosts events and projects throughout the year to promote invasive species awareness and management. Our activities include presentations in local schools, booths at the county fair and farmer's market, and hands-on control work with community volunteers. The NCWMA typically provides technical expertise, tools, equipment, refreshments, and/or educational materials, while our partners provide additional resources such as volunteers.

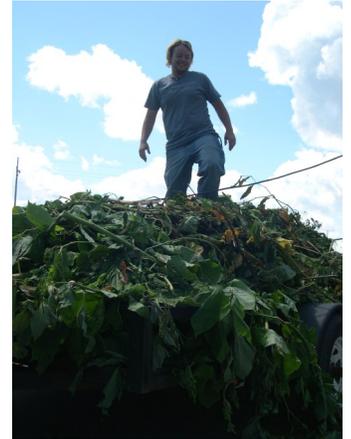
If you would like to partner with the NCMWA on a project or event, please fill out and send in a Project Proposal Form by March 1, 2013. The Project Proposal Form can be downloaded from our website. Project proposals will be reviewed at NCWMA meetings.



Please be sure to submit a form by March 1 so we can include your project or event in our schedule.

For more information, email info@northwoodscwma.org

Thank you in advance for your time and interest; we look forward to another year of great events with our partners!



Care to Join Us?

The Northwoods CWMA meets at 9:00 am on the second Tuesday of every month* at the Northern Great lakes Visitor Center on Highway G near Ashland, WI. The public is always welcome to attend, or just drop by to discuss an invasive species concern or question.

For more information, contact us at info@northwoodscwma.org, visit us online at www.northwoodscwma.org or find us on Facebook.

*Note that the January 2013 meeting is changed to Monday, January 14, same time and place.



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We're on the web!
www.northwoodscwma.org