

Japanese Knotweed

Fallopian japonica

Region of Origin: East Asia
Habitat: Perennial, deciduous, sub-shrub
Current Range: Asia, North America (39 States) & Europe
Flowering Season: Summer



Japanese knotweed has astounding regenerative prowess and the capacity to spread at lightning speed, especially near streams and roadsides. It is a rapidly growing, perennial plant with characteristic purple spots on the stem. The tubular structure of the stem allows even tiny pieces of knotweed to float through waterways and readily access new habitats to colonize along its journey. The dense root and leaf structure of knotweed stands make it nearly impossible for other plants to compete, and it is considered one of the world's most destructive invasive species. The strong scent of the lacy white blooms attract bees. And, many humans are attracted to its shoots, foraging them for their wonderful rhubarb taste. Avoid sites actively managed with herbicides, and be sure to collect the shoots when they are young and tender – no more than 8 inches tall.

A special thank you to author and ecologist Corinne Duncan for her content contributions to the Japanese Knotweed Introduction.

Japanese Knotweed Surprise

Recipe by [Wild Man Steve Brill](#)

2 cups Apples, cubed
 1 cup Knotweed Shoots, sliced
 ½ cup Apple Juice
 To Taste Sugar (optional)

- Gather your harvested knotweed and remove any leaves and stems.
- Chop the knotweed into a small enough size to fit into your cooking pot and peel those shoots which have begun to form leaves (these will have already begun to turn stringy).
- Throw the knotweed and chopped apples into a pot and pour apple juice on top.
- Bring to a boil and begin to simmer.
- Simmer for about 20 minutes or until soft. You will notice that the knotweed seems to melt into a thick, sauce-like consistency.
- Once the knotweed turns to a sauce-like consistency, serve and eat!



Japanese Knotweed Sherbet

Recipe by [Wild Man Steve Brill](#)

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|---------|---------------------------------------|--------|---|
| 6-8 ea | Knotweed Shoots, stripped of leaves | ¼ cup | Honey, Barley Malt, or Rice Syrup |
| 1½ cups | Orange Juice (fresh squeezed is best) | 1 Tbsp | Orange Zest |
| 1½ cups | Apple or Other Unsweetened Juice | 2 tsp | Vanilla Extract |
| ½ cup | Lemon | 1 tsp | Lemon Extract |
| ¼ cup | Canola Oil | 1 tsp | Liquid Stevia (or equivalent sweetener) |
| | | ½ tsp | Salt |

- In a medium saucepan, simmer knotweed shoots in orange, apple, and lemon juice over medium heat, covered, until shoots are tender, about 10 min.
- Transfer knotweed and juices to blender, and remaining ingredients, and process until smooth.
- Chill mixture until cold (1 hr in freezer or 4 hrs in fridge).
- Pour mixture into ice cream machine and freeze according to manufacturer's instructions.
- Makes 5 cups; serves
- Eat!



Japanese Knotweed Summer Rolls

Recipe and Photo courtesy of [The 3 Foragers](#)

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|---------|--------------------------------------|----------|----------------------------------|
| 6-10 ea | 8" Rice Paper Wrappers | 3 Tbsp | Dandelion Flower Petals |
| 3 oz | Bean Thread Noodle Cakes | 2 Tbsp | Chopped Ramp Leaves or Scallions |
| 1 cup | Knotweed Shoot Stems (thinly sliced) | 4 Tbsp | Shredded Carrots |
| ½ cup | Parsley and Cilantro Greens | To Taste | Dipping Sauce of Choice |

- Soak bean thread noodles in hot water for 10 minutes, until soft.
- Rinse and drain well.
- In a bowl, add the chopped knotweed, chickweed greens, dandelion petals, ramps, and carrots to the bean thread noodles. Toss well.
- Soften the rice paper wrappers in warm water for about 15 seconds until they are pliable.
- Place on a smooth surface. Take about 1/2 cup of the noodle filling and place it in the center of the top third of the wrapper.
- Fold over the top of the wrapper to cover the filling, then fold in the two sides toward the center.
- Roll filled wrapper towards the bottom, enclosing the filling completely. This may take some practice!
- Chill the summer rolls for 15 minutes, and serve with a spicy-sweet Thai dipping sauce.



Japanese Knotweed Muffins

Recipe and Photo courtesy of [The 3 Foragers](#)

½ cup	Sugar	1 ea	Egg
2 cups	Knotweed Stalks, chopped	1 cup	Flour
¼ cup	Water	½ cup	Sugar
1 Tbsp	Lemon Juice	½ tsp	Baking Powder
¼ cup	Oil	¼ tsp	Baking Soda
		¼ tsp	Cinnamon

- Preheat the oven to 325°, place baking papers in a muffin pan.
- In a saucepot, combine 1/2 cup sugar, the chopped knotweed stalks, 1/4 cup water and 1 Tbsp lemon juice.
- Cook over medium heat for 10 minutes, stirring often.
- Allow the stewed knotweed to cool. There should be about 1 c. stewed knotweed.
- In a large bowl, whisk the egg with the oil, and stir in the stewed knotweed.
- Sift together 1 c. flour, 1/2 c. sugar, baking powder, baking soda, and cinnamon.
- Stir into the wet ingredients in the large bowl, do not over mix.
- Fill the muffin papers about 3/4 full.
- Bake for 24-28 minutes, until the top is set and springs back when touched.
- Cool and serve with butter, or toasted. Makes 8 muffins.



Japanese Knotweed Vodka

Recipe by Andy Hamilton as published in [The Guardian](#)

450 g	Knotweed Shoots (16 oz - 2½ cups)
750 ml	Vodka (3¼ cups)
225 g	Sugar (1 cup)

- Gather knotweed shoots and chop into 3cm pieces, then put into a 1 litre jar.
- Add the sugar and vodka and seal. Shake well and leave for at least 3 - 4 weeks.
- Strain back into bottle through muslin/cheesecloth and place in a cool dark place for 3 months.

The discarded knotweed can be eaten and, as it tastes remarkably like rhubarb, works well in a crumble – simply follow the recipe for a rhubarb crumble replacing knotweed for rhubarb, weight for weight.



Photo by Roy Hunt

Spiced Japanese Knotweed Mousse

Recipe by Unknown

5 cups	Knotweed Shoots, stripped, chopped	1 Tbsp	Powdered Gelatin
¾ cup	Granulated Sugar	2 cups	Heavy Whipping Cream
¼ cup	Water	⅛ tsp	Salt
2 Tbsp	Spice of choice (peppermint, clove, cinnamon, nutmeg, pumpkin spice, etc.)	4 Tbsp	Powdered Sugar
		To Taste	Redi-Whip or Cool Whip

- Combine knotweed, water, and sugar in a saucepan; and cook, uncovered, for 15 minutes on medium heat until the knotweed is soft.
- Place contents of pan and spice in blender and puree until smooth.
- Chill a bowl in the freezer.
- Heat the knotweed puree on low heat in a pan until warm. Do not boil.
- Meanwhile, soak the gelatin in ice cold water until the gelatin is completely limp (about 10 minutes).
- Remove the gelatin from the water, then add it to the knotweed puree.
- Whisk until well combined.
- Chill in the fridge for 10-15 minutes.
- Combine the cream and powdered sugar in a chilled bowl.
- Whip the cream until it forms stiff peaks.
- Remove the pan with the chilled knotweed from the fridge.
- Whisk the knotweed mixture to loosen the puree. If the puree did not set, reheat the puree and add a little more gelatin, then repeat the process. Do this as many times as needed.
- Gently fold the cream into the knotweed mixture 1/3 at a time.
- Put the mousse in a container.
- Press plastic wrap down onto the surface of the mousse to prevent oxidization.
- Refrigerate the mousse overnight. It will set and become slightly stiff.
- Serve in whatever dish you wish to use by piping it from a pastry bag.
- Top with whipped cream and a sprinkle of whichever spice you used.

