

Himalayan Knotweed

Species Description

Scientific name: *Persicaria wallichii*

AKA: Cultivated Knotweed

Native to: China, India, Afghanistan, Nepal and Pakistan

Habitat: Abundant throughout both dry and moist areas including rocky outcrops, meadows, riparian woodlands and marshes.

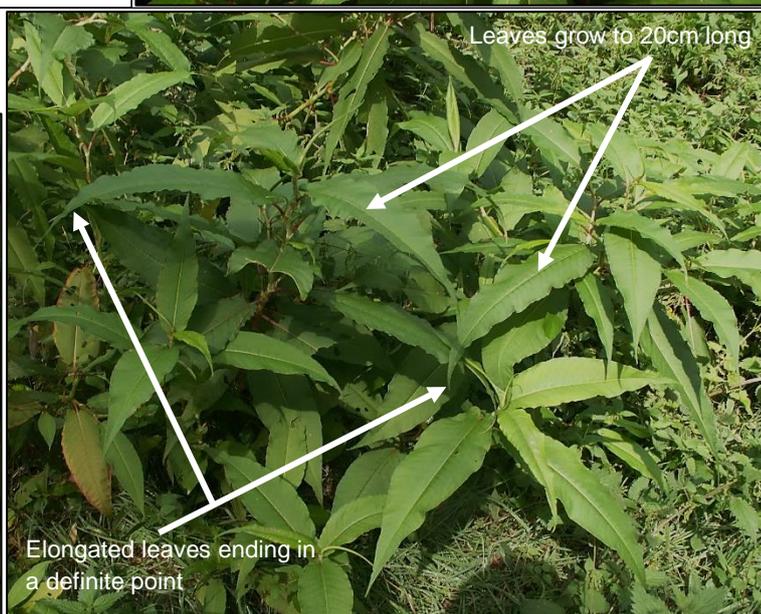
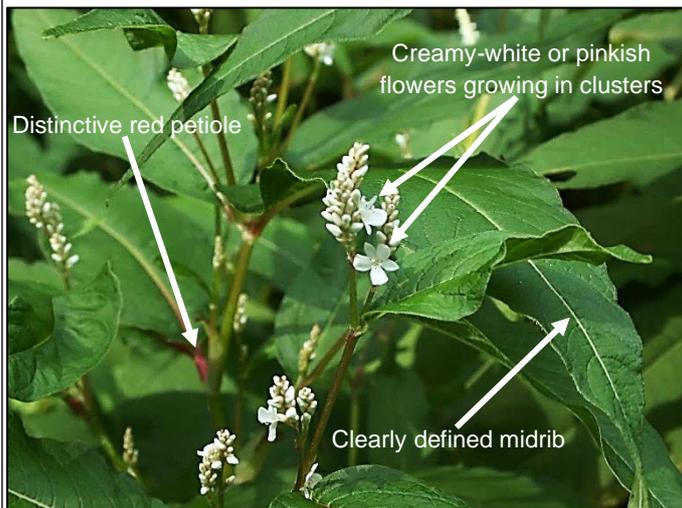
Himalayan Knotweed is a lesser known relative of the notorious Japanese Knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*) yet is forecast to cause many of the same economic, environmental and social problems once it becomes better established. Popularised as an attractive ornamental, this species was first recorded in the UK countryside in 1917, but has since spread from the confines of the garden via underground rhizomes (subterranean rootlike structures) and the illegal dumping of green waste throughout the British countryside.

Similar in appearance to its Japanese counterpart, *P. wallichii* is comparatively shorter, growing to a height of approximately 1.8m. Furthermore, in contrast to Japanese Knotweed which possesses distinctly triangularly shaped leaves, the leaves of Himalayan Knotweed are much longer, growing to 20cm in length and finish in a distinct point. Its current range is largely restricted to Scotland, Wales and the England-Wales border region.

Commonly found along road verges, streamsides and grasslands, plants can grow rapidly from root fragments which rapidly develop into dense mats. This plant has no natural predators in the UK and its spread is of significant concern to areas inhabited by numerous threatened species of flora and fauna alike.



Key ID Features



Identification throughout the Year

Similar to Japanese Knotweed, *P. wallichii* overwinters as rhizomes and is unidentifiable until the spring. During the growth period, identification is based on the distinctive red petiole, the lanceolate leaves and the clusters of small creamy-white/pinkish flowers. During autumn, leaves will begin to wilt as displayed by a pronounced yellow colouration until winter, where the plant will appear dead, existing as pale hollow stalks.

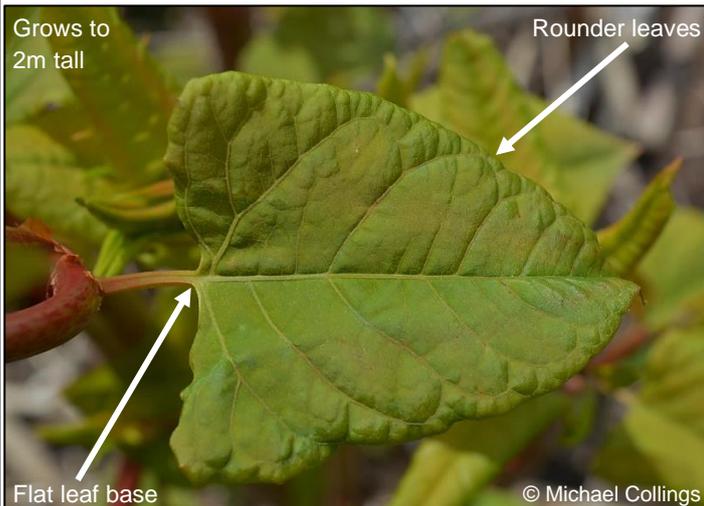


Similar Species

Broad-leaved Dock (*Rumex obtusifolius*)
[Native]



Japanese Knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*)
[Invasive Non-native]



Distribution

Largely restricted to Wales and the West and East coasts of Scotland, further populations are now beginning to be recorded in Eastern England and Suffolk.



Source: NBN Atlas. Check website for current distribution.

References and Further Reading:

GBNNS (2018) *Himalayan Knotweed, Persicaria wallichii*. Available at: <http://www.nonnativespecies.org/factsheet/factsheet.cfm?speciesId=2603> (Accessed: 27th April 2018).

Plantlife (2019) *Himalayan knotweed*. Available at: <https://www.plantlife.org.uk/uk/discover-wild-plants-nature/plant-fungi-species/himalayan-knotweed> (Accessed: 30th January 2019).

Streeter, D. (2009) *Collins flower guide: the most complete guide to the flowers of Britain & Europe*. London: Collins.

van de Witte, Y. (2015) *Persicaria wallichii (Himalayan knotweed)*. Available at: <https://www.cabi.org/isc/datasheet/120210> (Accessed: 27th April 2018).