

Invasive of the Week Watch: Japanese Knotweed

By: Tanner Ruechel

An infestation of Japanese Knotweed is much like a scene from a movie where an explorer is chopping through a jungle for days just to get through. Knotweed has a bamboo like stem and the plants grow so thick it is impossible to get through without cutting a path. The plant has rhizomes which are a horizontal root system that can send up shoots forming a new plant making it difficult to eradicate by simply cutting it down. This invasive has been found on an empty lot just off of Lake Redstone and is very prominent in the neighboring Richland County.

Japanese Knotweed has many detrimental effects on both wildlife and civilization. It starts by making stream and lake shores inaccessible by creating a wall of stalks almost ten feet high. Knotweed completely shades out the ground leaving the soil bare in-between the stems, allowing for erosion, which is already a problem for Lake Redstone residents. Europe has been dealing with this invasive for some time now in their cities and streets creating a completely different range of problems. Knotweed can grow up through streets, sidewalks, and other pavement causing countless dollars in damage. Structural damage can also occur for businesses and homes where infestations are present. Removal of Knotweed can be tiresome work once established and, if not done properly, can even increase a population. This plant can easily transplant itself with small fragments of its stems so proper disposal is necessary.



If you would like to keep shorelines accessible and prevent the spread of Japanese Knotweed and other invasive species from finding their way to Lake Redstone and Dutch Hollow Lake, please offer to volunteer a few hours any day this summer with Clean Boats Clean Waters by contacting Tanner Ruechel through email ruechelt@gmail.com or phone (920) 621-3282.

Additionally, if you volunteer **5 hours** by Labor Day you can spend a day at the Wilderness Waterpark Resort for **FREE**. Contact Tanner for details.