

Control of Japanese Knotweed

(Home and Garden Situation)

Chemical control is the most successful treatment for controlling Japanese Knotweed as it kills the extensive rhizome system. Unfortunately, in the Home and Garden situation the number of effective herbicides capable of controlling the weed is limited. It is advised, therefore, to combine cutting with any chemical treatment. Alternatively a professionally trained contractor could be engaged to treat the problem.

Cutting

The use of a strimmer to cut Japanese Knotweed is not advised because it tends to create small pieces which can 'fly off' to root and start new infestations.

Cut the individual stems at ground level e.g. with a knife, secateurs or shears. Collect the stems and dry them until they are dark brown before burning in situ. Moving them to another site will increase the risk of initiating new infestations.

Where burning is not possible the cut stems can be placed fresh or dried in strong black polythene sacks to compost. To ensure that no live plant material escapes use two plastic sacks one inside the other. Alternatively Mon Cuet Landfill site will accept Japanese Knotweed as green waste.

Cutting can be used in two situations:

1. Frequent cutting can be used to reduce the vigour of a knotweed stand over a period of time so that the plants are more prone to chemical treatment. Cut the plants when they reach a height of 0.5-1 metre. After a couple of seasons the knotweed stand will be suitable for a herbicide treatment.
2. Cut large plants and treat the regrowth with a series of herbicide treatments. Apply the herbicide when the plants are about 0.5m high and continue to treat the regrowth.

Choice of herbicide

The number of effective herbicides is limited to:

- Glyphosate
- Triclopyr
- 2,4-D/Dicamba /MCPA/Mecoprop-P

Glyphosate is a total weed killer and will also kill other garden plants. Triclopyr and products containing 2,4-D, Dicamba, MCPA & Mecoprop-P can be used on lawns without damaging the grass.

Glyphosate

There are several different formulations available but **Roundup Tree Stump & Root Killer** is an example of a product that has a recommendation for knotweed control. It can be used as a spray when the plants are 0.5m tall or to control the weak plants after a period of cutting. Single treatments will not give total control. Apply additional treatments through the growing season, in particular, to the plants in late September when the food reserves from the leaves are going back into the underground rhizomes.

Roundup Tree Stump and Root Killer also has a recommendation as an autumn stem treatment to mature stems. This is a more environmentally friendly way of applying the chemical. Read the product label and follow the instructions.

Triclopyr

SBK Brushwood Killer containing triclopyr can be used to give some control of knotweed. Repeated applications through the growing season are essential.

2,4-D/Dicamba/MCPA/Mecoprop-P

These active ingredients products form the basis of several selective weed killers for lawns. If small knotweed plants are present in lawns then the use of these products will give some control.

Areas within the water catchment area

Herbicides should not be applied within 3m of high risk areas such as stream banks, ponds, wet meadows, douits and drainage ditches. (The Prevention of Pollution (Guernsey) Law 1989).

For further advice contact Guernsey water on 239500 or www.water.gg

For more general advice contact The States Analyst Laboratory on 707612.