**Japanese knotweed**  
*Polygonum cuspidatum* Sieb. & Zucc

**Life cycle**  
Aggressive, clump-forming perennial.

**Leaves**  
Alternate, broadly egg-shaped, sometimes heart-shaped with a squared leaf base.

**Stems**  
Stout, semiwoody, red to brown, hollow and bamboo-like, often exceeding 6 to 8 feet in height. Stems are also jointed, forming a zigzag growth pattern. A membranous sheath (ocrea) surrounds the stem at the base of each petiole. Reddish shoots arise from thick, sturdy and abundant rhizomes.

**Flowers and fruit**  
Flowers are small, white to pink and borne in elongated clusters. The seed is enclosed in a single-seeded, shiny, dark brown to black, three-sided fruit.

Back to identifying Christmas tree weeds.
Japanese knotweed *continued*

**Reproduction**

Seeds and aggressive rhizomes.

 softball Image

Japanese knotweed foliage.

 softball Image

Japanese knotweed flower cluster.

**Similar weeds**

**Giant knotweed**

*P. sachalinense* F. W. Schmidt

Differs by having a greater height and heart-shaped leaf base.

**Polygonaceae (Smartweed family)**