

Amsterdam, april 2023

Japanse Duizendknoop Festival

Mediamatic



lief
je
gast

Gezond, sterk,

muzikaal, lekker

zaam én gevreesd.

met ons de

A stack of orange and yellow pipes is the central focus, arranged in a grid. Each pipe's circular opening acts as a lens, reflecting the surrounding environment. The reflections show a lush green field, a road with a car, and a blue sky with white clouds. The pipes are set against a background of dense green foliage on the left and a paved road on the right. The overall scene is bright and sunny.

My exotic neighborhood

An echo from the Flemish field.

Sus Willems

<https://www.duizendknopenontward.com/>

To frame for a moment

- People have always distributed species.
- In the past, ecosystems were given time to adapt; in recent centuries, species have been moving too fast, putting ecosystems under pressure with disappearing of species as a result.
- Not all ecosystems are equally sensitive. Small islands are especially vulnerable. Because of their history and location, our lowlands are relatively resistant to current and future invasions.
- We must remain objective; damage to infrastructure or nature are not unique characteristics of exotics. Native species can also cause damage, as the badgers demonstrated recently in railway embankments.
- We should not give species characteristics they do not have; Invasive knotweed cannot pierce concrete or hard structures! They can, however, force open structures such as masonry, just as our native trees do.

The management of the invasive Black Cherry*; what can we learn from it?

- For more than fifty years many resources have been invested in controlling Black cherry.
- However, this exotic species was primarily a management problem, not an ecological problem.
- Co-evolution has ensured, however, that this exotic species is certainly no longer invasive in Flanders.

* (Prunus serotina)



Japanese knotweed: some facts

- This invasive species will never go away.
- He can be troublesome, but damage is often greatly exaggerated.
- Doing nothing is a perfect management option for many vegetations. Co-evolution will occur in these vegetations
- A lack of understanding of the ecology is causing many control actions to backfire.
- There are already native species that can compete with knotweed.





Knotweed can be integrated into our environment; Flanders, Olen, Bankloop

- Selective pruning keeps knotweed under control and allows native species to develop. Here, a reed vegetation form a buffer against knotweed.
- [link Bankloop](#)

Another native species that can compete with knotweed is hops (*Humulus lupulus*).



A large, dense green bush of hops growing against a brick building. The hops are in full leaf and appear to be in the process of flowering. The building behind them has a brick facade and a window with a white frame. The ground in the foreground is a mix of dirt and gravel.

An ecological sarcophagus of hops (Kasterlee)

Selective pruning favors hops, and also encapsulates Knotweed

[link Kasterlee parking](#)



Old man's beard
(*Clematis vitalba*) and wild
vine (*Parthenocissus*) can
also encapsulate
knotweed.

[link Vines](#)



And that gives
beautiful
vegetations.

[Link, Lier, Leuvensevest](#)

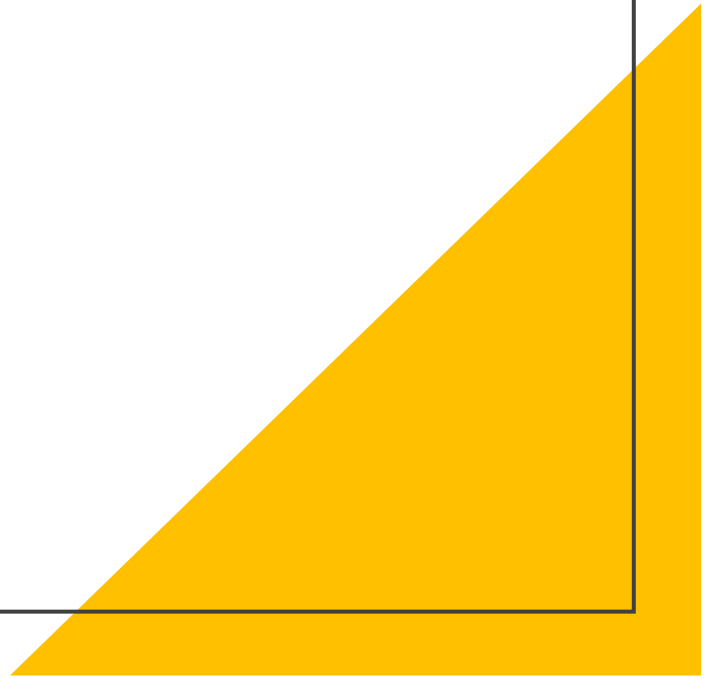
Suggestions for green managers and contractors

- Maximum prevention; bio sanitary measures in construction works.
- In case of new infections, act quickly.
- Control of existing vegetations.
- Custom combat; there is no silver bullet!
- [link bouwproject te Geel](#)



Urgent call!

- Install natural reserves of invasive exotics, to study their ecology, and to give co-evolution maximum chance.





For example;
Soldatenbos te
Kessel (Flanders), A
black cherry natural
reserve?

[link Kessel, soldatenbos](#)

Here, native pathogens have a chance to crack the immunity code of black cherry.





Native pathogens
also try to break
knotweed's
immunity code,
can we speed up
this process?

As we say in
Flanders

*“Nature management
is a matter of
knowledge,
communication,
opportunity, discipline
and ... patience!”*



Voor Mediamatic

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