

2021 September *Guess that Plant*



Persicaria lapathifolium (L) Delarbre; Pale or Nodding Knotweed

The September *Guess that Plant* is an facultative native wetland annual common to New Jersey's disturbed habitats. This smartweed is also known as pale or culrytop knotweed. Its synonym binomial is *Polygonum lapathifolium*. The genus is identified in the smartweed family, the Polygonaceae. Nodding knotweed is distinguished from other smartweeds by its large stature, often reach more than a meter in height. It has drooping flower spikes, and the flowers are a pale pink color. As the common names indicate, the inflorescence droops, providing the nodding effect. Mary Hough (1983) maps the species through Northern New Jersey, with few south county collections. My southern New Jersey observations has identified the species in all seven Coastal Plain counties. The western Native American tribes used the plant for a medicine, food and fiber.

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