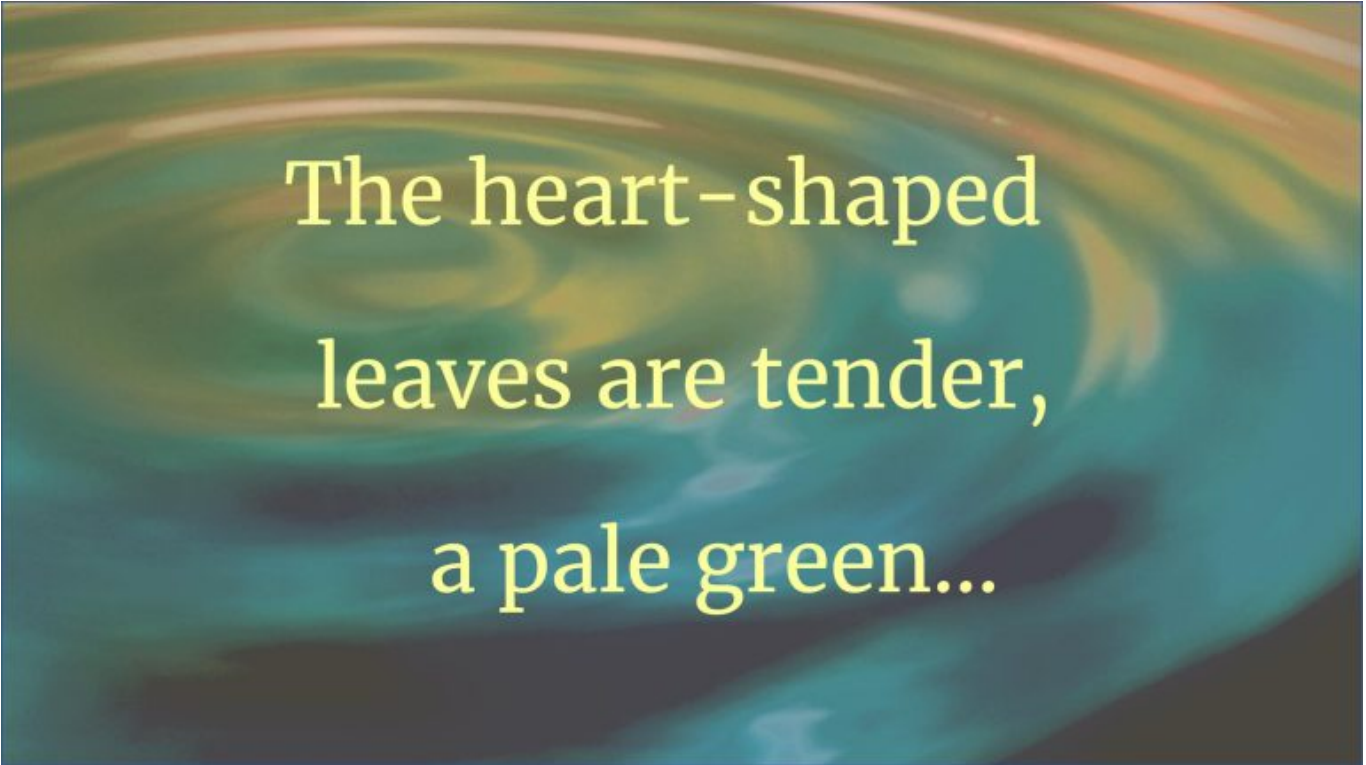


Cultivation Also Starts With C

Category: Poems

written by Jess Skyleson | June 23, 2023



The heart-shaped
leaves are tender,
a pale green...

The eradication of non-native *Fallopia japonica*, for all intents and purposes, must be considered a practical impossibility. The aggressive nature of the plant, combined with the similarly harmful side effects of the removal options, renders it one of the most devastating blights facing modern homeowners today.

Early shoots are pliable and pink,
appearing just after the final snowfall
has fully melted, like a blush
across the newly naked earth.

The species is highly invasive, growing vigorously in all manner of environments, robbing the soil of nutrients while it deprives other native species of light. Homeowners often find that an afflicted property becomes un-insurable as well as un-inhabitable, as the dense thickets choke out waterways, and infiltrate building foundations.

The heart-shaped leaves are tender,
a pale green, speckled with white
like goosebumps arising,
as they unfurl in the chill morning air.

Once its presence has been detected, the need for prompt action cannot be understated. The roots will

proliferate before visual signs become apparent.
The plant's hardiness, combined with its rapidly
spreading nature, means even single shoots can quickly
invade neighboring properties, overrunning entire cities.

At maturity, the leaves arch into a crown
thick with verdant shade, tall enough
to conceal all trace of people living
like sunken eyes, within a youthful face.

Typical chemical treatments have little lasting impact,
resulting in permanent damage to the underlying soil.
If the roots are dug with the intention of removal,
this must be done with complete surgical precision,
as even minute traces of the root or stem can readily
re-propagate, perpetuating the lifecycle of the plant.

Laying down my test results, the doctor turns,
to where I shiver in a flimsy cotton gown.
Have you ever, she quietly asks,
heard of Japanese knotweed?