

## FALLOPIA

### 1. *Fallopia* × *bohemica*

*Fallopia* × *bohemica* (*F. japonica* × *F. sachalinensis*) is widely established in Britain but is probably under-recorded (Bailey *et al.* 1996). Voucher material from Ireland is required.

The most reliable characters for the identification of *Fallopia* hybrids are leaf shape, size, and the type of hair on the lower leaf surface. It is most important that only fully mature basal leaves are examined since early season leaves and leaves from the upper part of the plant are extremely variable and of little use for identification. When gathering material for herbarium specimens always include some of the biggest lower leaves available.

It should be noted that absence of good seed-set is not a sign of hybridity in this genus, for, although *F. japonica* × *F. sachalinensis* is much less fertile than its parents, even the parents set no or very little seed in most localities in the British Isles.

	<i>F. sachalinensis</i> ( <i>F. Schmidt ex Maxim.</i> ) Ronse Decr.	<i>F. × bohemica</i> (Chrték & Chrtková) J. P. Bailey	<i>F. japonica</i> (Houtt.) Ronse Decr.
Habit	Striking, gigantic plant to 4 m in suitable sites	Intermediate, 2.5-4 m	Smaller, 2-3 m
Lower leaves	Ovate to oblong, base cordate, apex acute; up to 40 × 22 cm, length:width ratio <i>c.</i> 1.5-1.7, undersides of leaves with scattered, long, flexuose hairs	Intermediate in size and shape, weakly to moderately cordate at base, apex acuminate; up to 23 × 19 cm, length:width ratio 1.1-1.6; undersides of larger leaves with numerous short stout hairs (× 10 lens)	Ovate, base truncate, apex acuminate; 10-15 cm long, length:width ratio 1-1.5; undersides entirely glabrous

# Plant Crib

Flowers	Male fertile flowers (with exerted anthers) and male sterile flowers (with small, empty included anthers and well developed stigmas) borne on separate plants	Male fertile and male sterile flowers borne on separate plants	Flowers usually male sterile
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*F. japonica* × *F. baldschuanica* (Regel) Holub is at present only known from a single plant in London (Bailey 1993), but since seed of this hybrid has been collected from *F. japonica* plants all over the country it could theoretically turn up anywhere. Superficially it resembles *F. japonica* in habit, but with more slender stems up to 2 m long, arching over almost to touch the ground; leaves ovate to narrowly ovate-oblong, with an acuminate tip and a truncate base, almost triangular, size up to 13 × 6.5 cm. There is little chance of mistaking this herbaceous plant for *F. baldschuanica*, a scrambling woody perennial. There is, however, more than a chance of mistaking regrowth from weed-killed *F. japonica* for this hybrid, so do not be fooled by weedy shoots pushing their way through the tarmac next to stands of *F. japonica*!

*F. sachalinensis* × *F. baldschuanica* may be awaiting discovery; it is similar to the above, but with larger leaves.

**References** Bailey, J. P. (1993). *Urban Nature* **1**: 50-51.  
Bailey, J. P., Child, L. E. & Conolly, A. P. (1996). *Watsonia* **21**: 187-198.

**Author** J. P. Bailey, 1997.

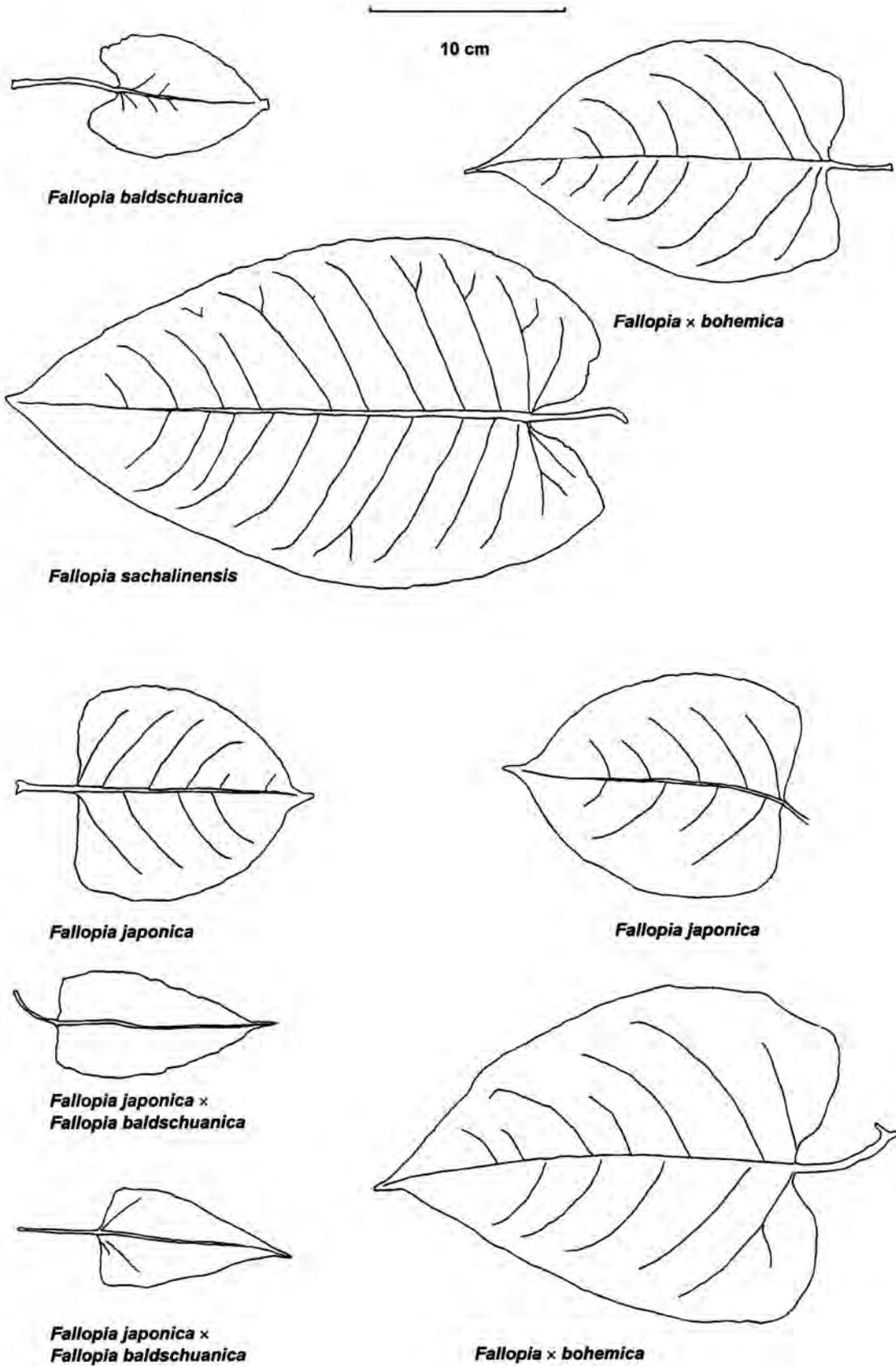
## 2. *Fallopia convolvulus* / *F. dumetorum*

The two species were frequently confused in the past, partly on account of the emphasis once placed on the winged perianth of *F. dumetorum*, a feature that can be present also in *F. convolvulus*. The following key indicates how distinct these two species are:-

- 1 Fruiting pedicels 1-3 mm; nut 4-5 mm, finely punctate, dull
- 1 Fruiting pedicels (3-)5-8 mm; nut 2.5-3 mm, smooth, glossy

*F. convolvulus* (L.) Á. Löve  
*F. dumetorum* (L.) Holub

# Plant Crib



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The outer perianth-segments of *F. dumetorum* are always broadly winged in fruit, the wings decurrent on the pedicel. The outer perianth-segments of *F. convolvulus* are usually keeled or narrowly winged, but in var. *subalatum* (Lej. & Courtois) D. H. Kent, a generally robust variant of rich soils, they are well-developed and give the plant something of the appearance of *F. dumetorum*. *F. convolvulus* is a weed of disturbed ground, whereas *F. dumetorum* is a plant of hedges and woodland margins.

*F. dumetorum* is a very locally distributed, declining plant (*Scarce Plants*). The population sizes can vary enormously from year to year related to coppicing cycles or hedge clearance and it may be necessary to revisit some sites regularly. In some areas, such as Sussex, the best way to spot the plant is to look for the sinuous shoots spreading out from hedge tops. Full details of all sites should be recorded.

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