



Cooperative Extension Service  
Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences

## *Ajuga reptans*<sup>1</sup>

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### Introduction

This ground-hugging groundcover produces a profusion of dark green to bronze- or purple-colored leaves in a flat rosette, spreading fairly quickly by runners or stolons (Fig. 1). Plant on 6 to 12-inch centers for quick establishment of a thick ground cover. Six-inch tall spikes of small blue flowers are produced in spring to early summer and are especially attractive when plants are massed together. There are selections with foliage variegated in green, white, red, yellow, and pink.

### General Information

**Scientific name:** *Ajuga reptans*

**Pronunciation:** uh-JOO-guh REP-tanz

**Common name(s):** Bugleweed, Carpet Bugleweed

**Family:** *Lamiaceae*

**Plant type:** ground cover; perennial; herbaceous

**USDA hardiness zones:** 4 through 10A (Fig. 2)

**Planting month for zone 7:** year round

**Planting month for zone 8:** year round

**Planting month for zone 9:** year round

**Planting month for zone 10 and 11:** year round

**Origin:** not native to North America

**Uses:** mass planting; container or above-ground planter; ground cover; edging

**Availability:** somewhat available, may have to go out of the region to find the plant

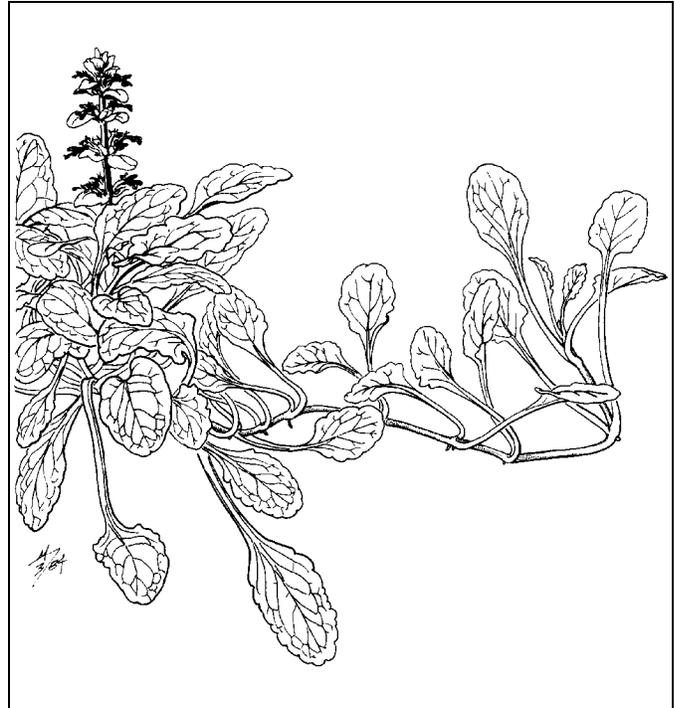


Figure 1. Bugleweed.

**Spread:** .5 to 1 feet

**Plant habit:** prostrate (flat)

**Plant density:** dense

**Growth rate:** slow

**Texture:** medium

### Foliage

### Description

**Height:** 0 to .5 feet

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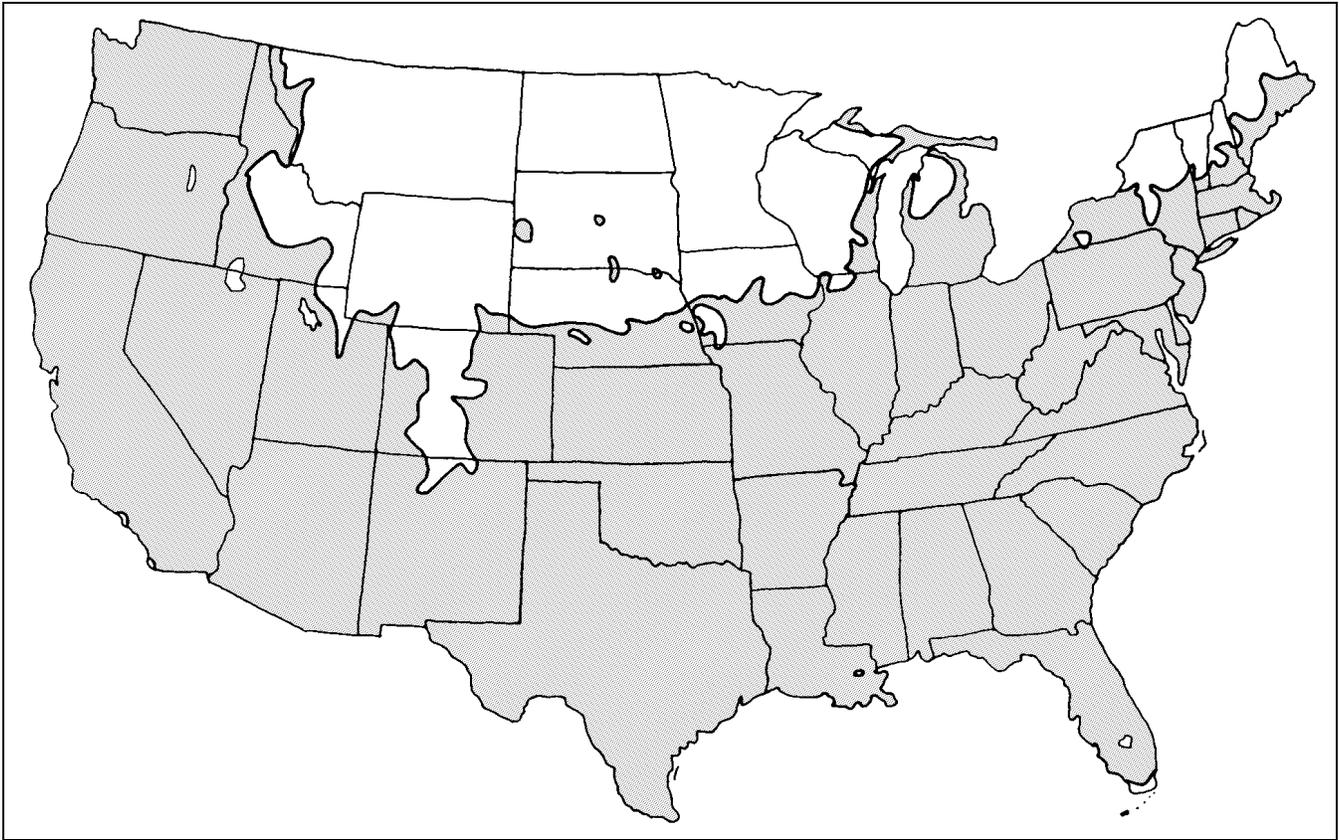


Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

**Leaf arrangement:** basal rosette

**Leaf type:** simple

**Leaf margin:** undulate

**Leaf shape:** ovate

**Leaf venation:** pinnate

**Leaf type and persistence:** evergreen

**Leaf blade length:** 4 to 8 inches

**Leaf color:** purple or red; variegated

**Fall color:** no fall color change

**Fall characteristic:** not showy

**Flower**

**Flower color:** pink

**Flower characteristic:** spring flowering

**Fruit**

**Fruit shape:** no fruit

**Fruit length:** no fruit

**Fruit cover:** no fruit

**Fruit color:** no fruit

**Fruit characteristic:** no fruit

**Trunk and Branches**

**Trunk/bark/branches:** not applicable

**Current year stem/twig color:** not applicable

**Current year stem/twig thickness:** not applicable

**Culture**

**Light requirement:** plant grows in part shade/part sun; plant grows in the shade

**Soil tolerances:** slightly alkaline; acidic; clay; sand; loam;

**Drought tolerance:** moderate

**Soil salt tolerances:** poor

**Plant spacing:** 6 to 12 inches

**Other**

**Roots:** not applicable

**Winter interest:** no special winter interest

**Outstanding plant:** not particularly outstanding

**Invasive potential:** aggressive, spreading plant

**Pest resistance:** very sensitive to one or more pests or diseases which can affect plant health or aesthetics

## Use and Management

Growing best in shady locations, Bugle Weed will tolerate full sun in the northern end of its range as long as it can be provided with moist, but not soggy, fertile soil. It looks best in small gardens or small spaces and in other enclosed areas where the tight foliage can cover the ground around or in front of small shrubs.

Available cultivars include: 'Multicoloris', leaves mottled red, white, and yellow on green; 'Alba', white flowers; 'Atropurpurea', bronze foliage and blue flowers; 'Burgundy Glow', new leaves bright burgundy-red, mature leaves cream-white and dark pink; 'Rubra', rose flowers, more vigorous; 'Variegata', grey-green leaves with cream markings.

Propagation is by division, rarely by seed.

Susceptible to nematodes on sandy soils.

## Pests and Diseases

Crown rot can occur on soggy soils.

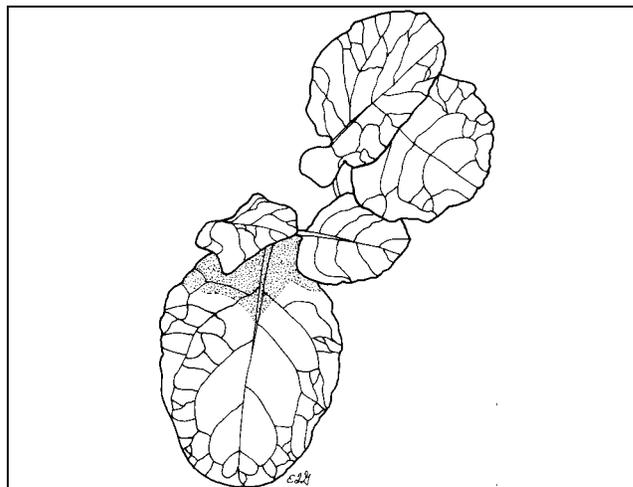


Figure 3. Foliage of Bugleweed