

Impatiens balsamina¹

Edward F. Gilman, Teresa Howe²

Introduction

Balsam produces flowers of various colors in the leaf axils on plants from six inches to two feet tall (Fig. 1).

General Information

Scientific name: Impatiens balsamina

Pronunciation: im-PAY-shenz bal-SAM-min-uh **Common name(s):** Balsam, Touch-Me-Not

Family: Balsaminaceae Plant type: annual

USDA hardiness zones: all zones (Fig. 2) **Planting month for zone 7:** Jun; Jul **Planting month for zone 8:** May; Jun; Jul

Planting month for zone 9: Apr; May; Jun; Jul; Aug

Planting month for zone 10 and 11: Mar; Apr; May; Jun; Jul;

Aug; Sep

Origin: not native to North America

Uses: mass planting; container or above-ground planter; border **Availablity:** somewhat available, may have to go out of the

region to find the plant

Description

Height: 1 to 2.5 feet Spread: .5 to 1.5 feet Plant habit: upright Plant density: dense Growth rate: fast Texture: medium

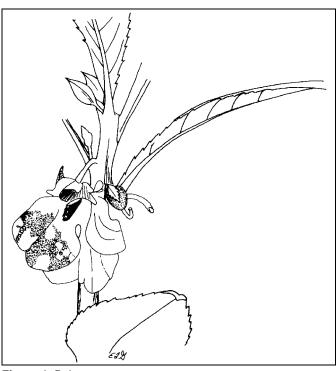


Figure 1. Balsam.

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: opposite/subopposite

Leaf type: simple Leaf margin: serrate Leaf shape: lanceolate Leaf venation: pinnate

Leaf type and persistence: not applicable

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- Edward F. Gilman, professor, Environmental Horticulture Department, Teresa Howe, coordinator Research Programs/Services, Gulf Coast REC, Bradenton, Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida, Gainesville, 32611.

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Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

Leaf blade length: 2 to 4 inches

Leaf color: green

Fall color: not applicable

Fall characteristic: not applicable

Flower

Flower color: white; pink; salmon; purple; lavender

Flower characteristic: showy

Fruit

Fruit shape: no fruit
Fruit length: no fruit
Fruit cover: no fruit
Fruit color: not applicable

Fruit characteristic: inconspicuous and not showy

Trunk and Branches

Trunk/bark/branches: not applicable Current year stem/twig color: green

Current year stem/twig thickness: very thick

Culture

Light requirement: plant grows in full sun **Soil tolerances:** clay; sand; acidic; loam

Drought tolerance:

Soil salt tolerances: unknown **Plant spacing:** 12 to 18 inches

Other

Roots: not applicable

Winter interest: not applicable

Outstanding plant: not particularly outstanding **Invasive potential:** not known to be invasive

Pest resistance: very sensitive to one or more pests or diseases

which can affect plant health or aesthetics

Use and Management

Balsam grows best in full sun to shade on well-drained but moist soils, and should be spaced 12 to 14 inches apart. Plants will need a mostly shaded area in USDA hardiness zones 8 and 9 during the summer. Balsam grows poorly in USDA hardiness zones 10 and 11 during the summer unless placed in total shade. In USDA hardiness zones 9b, 10, and 11, *Impatiens* is generally planted in the fall for winter and spring color.

Balsams develop good root systems and transplant well, but may wilt for a day or two after transplanting. Even large plants can be successfully moved if they are watered frequently after being relocated.

The seed can be sown directly into the garden. Germination takes 8 to 14 days at 70-degrees F.

Pests and Diseases

Aphids suck plants juices causing distorted growth. Spotted cucumber beetle feeds on the blossoms. Tarnished plant bug feeds on the new shoots causing them to turn black. Leaf spots are an infrequent problem. Infected leaves can be picked off.