Impatiens x New Guinea Hybrids

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Introduction

This easily-grown annual distinguishes itself from the common garden Impatiens by its brilliantly-marked foliage and ability to tolerate greater amounts of sun once it is well-established for several weeks in the landscape (Fig. 1). Available in upright, rounded or flatter, spreading forms, from 8 inches to 2 feet in height, ‘New Guinea’ Impatiens have very large leaves, often variegated with red or yellow, and large, single flowers available in shades of lavender, purple, pink, red, orange, or white.

General Information

Scientific name: Impatiens x New Guinea Hybrids
Pronunciation: im-PAY-shenz
Common name(s): New Guinea Impatiens
Family: Balsaminaceae
Plant type: annual
USDA hardiness zones: all zones (Fig. 2)
Planting month for zone 7: Jun; Jul; Aug
Planting month for zone 8: Jun; Jul
Planting month for zone 9: Apr; Sep; Oct; Nov
Planting month for zone 10 and 11: Feb; Mar; Apr; Oct; Nov; Dec
Origin: not native to North America
Uses: edging; mass planting; container or above-ground planter; attracts butterflies
Availability: generally available in many areas within its hardiness range

Description

Height: 1 to 2 feet
Spread: 1 to 2 feet
Plant habit: round
Plant density: dense
Growth rate: fast
Texture: medium

Figure 1. New Guinea Impatiens.
Foliage

Leaf arrangement: alternate
Leaf type: simple
Leaf margin: serrate
Leaf shape: ovate
Leaf venation: not applicable
Leaf type and persistence: not applicable
Leaf blade length: 4 to 8 inches
Leaf color: purple or red
Fall color: not applicable
Fall characteristic: not applicable

Flower

Flower color: white; red; pink; lavender; orange; purple
Flower characteristic: showy

Trunk and Branches

Trunk/bark/branches: not applicable
Current year stem/twig color: reddish
Current year stem/twig thickness: thick

Culture

Light requirement: plant grows in part shade/part sun
Soil tolerances: acidic; sand; clay; 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: long-term health usually not affected by pests

Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.
Use and Management

Performing best in light shade but tolerant of nearly full sun during the winter in south Florida, ‘New Guinea’ Impatiens are ideal for edgings, borders, or mass plantings. Plants should receive regular waterings and fertilizations. Daily irrigation is needed in Florida in warm weather. Sunny locations are suitable for planting in the summer only in cool climates. Plants in Florida usually stop flowering in the summer, even when located in the shade. They make a nice spring and fall color show in north and central Florida, and grow well all winter long in south Florida.

Space plants about 18 to 24 inches apart for mass plantings. A mass or group of plants will form a ‘mound’ of color which is higher in the middle and low and rounded along the edge of the grouping. Plant no closer than 12 inches from a walk or driveway to allow the plant to spread out. One plant will normally fill a small container in 8 to 10-weeks forming a large, symmetrical round head.

Although previously difficult to grow from seed, recent introductions have produced a fertile seed mixture. ‘New Guinea Spectra Hybrids’ offer a multitude of color forms and leaf variegations. ‘Sweet Sue’, with bronzed foliage and bright orange, 2 to 3-inch flowers, can also be grown from seed. ‘Spectra’ series and ‘Tango’ are also seed propagated.

Pests and Diseases

No pests or diseases are of major concern.