

BALSAMINACEAE – TOUCH-ME-NOT FAMILY

Plant: mostly herbs; annual or perennial; some shrub-like

Stem: often somewhat transparent, hollow, succulent with watery juice

Root:

Leaves: simple, entire or toothed; alternate, opposite or whorled in 3's; pinnately veined; stipules reduced to glands or none

Flowers: perfect and usually solitary or in small clusters; flowers perfect, irregular (zygomorphic), often nodding; sepals 3 or 5 resembling petals of which the upper one projects backward as a spur (flower twisted upside down, resupinate); petals 5 but appear to be 3 in local species, 2 lateral pairs (fused) plus an upper; in others 3 petals give a larger lower lobed lip, upper smaller; 5 stamens (fused); ovary superior, 1 pistil, 1 style, carpels 4-5 (fused)

Fruit: capsule or pod, seeds expelled explosively, or berry-like drupe

Other: mostly tropical, only 2 native species in N.A.; Dicotyledons Group

Genera: 4 genera; locally only *Impatiens* (touch-me-not)

Balsaminaceae (Touch-Me-Not-Family) – a complex flower with 3 sepals and 5 petals (petals fused to look like 3 but each lateral (lower) lobe is 2 fused petals), 2 colored sepals cup the flower and the third colored sepal forms the large pouch and spur (the flower is actually turned upside down); stem is often semi-transparent with a watery juice; fruit in this genus is an explosive capsule (Juice said to ease itching of poison ivy and bites)

Genus Impatiens



Also called Jewelweeds



Capsules or Pods

BALSAMINACEAE – TOUCH-ME-NOT FAMILY

Orange Jewelweed [Spotted Touch-Me-Not]; *Impatiens capensis* Meerb.

Yellow Jewelweed [Pale Touch-Me-Not]; *Impatiens pallida* Nutt.

Orange Jewelweed [Spotted Touch-Me-Not]



Impatiens capensis Meerb.

Balsaminaceae (Touch-Me-Not Family)

Maumee River Metroparks, Lucas County, Ohio

Notes: flowers orange (rarely white), spotted with brown or red, incurved spur mostly in line with flower; leaves elliptical to somewhat lanceolate and toothed; stem glabrous and sometimes glaucous; fruit a pod; usually in moist areas; summer to fall

[V Max Brown, 2004]



Yellow Jewelweed [Pale Touch-Me-Not]

Impatiens pallida Nutt.

Balsaminaceae (Touch-Me-Not Family)

Maumee River Metroparks, Lucas County, Ohio

Notes: flower yellow, sometimes spotted with red, spur at angle to flower; leaves elliptical to lanceolate and toothed; stem glabrous, sometimes glaucous; fruit a pod; usually in moist areas; summer to fall

[V Max Brown, 2004]

