

# ORNAMENTAL JEWELWEED

*Impatiens glandulifera*



**N**ative to the Himalayas, ornamental jewelweed is a highly invasive species that has spread across much of Europe and the northern United States, from Alaska to Maine. It was introduced in the 1800s as a garden plant because of its showy flowers. The species was first detected in Alaska in 2004. Within Southeast AK, we have found infestations in Juneau, Haines, Skagway, Petersburg, and Wrangell.

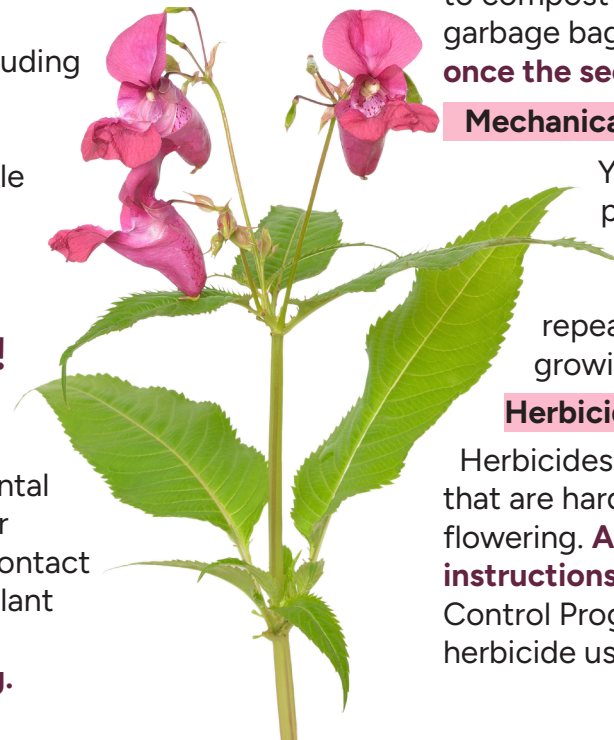
Ornamental jewelweed is an annual (one year lifecycle) that reproduces via seed. The seeds are enclosed in seed pods which explosively eject the seeds when disturbed. The floating seeds are commonly dispersed by water and are viable in the soil for up to five years.

## WHERE DOES IT GROW?

Ornamental jewelweed thrives in damp environments, including along streams, beaches, forests, and wetlands. While it prefers sunlight, it can persist in shaded areas.

## **We can help!**

If you would like assistance managing ornamental jewelweed on your property, please contact SAWC's invasive plant coordinator at [reed@sawcak.org](mailto:reed@sawcak.org).



## MANAGEMENT

### **Report sightings**

If you see this plant, **please report it!** Post on iNaturalist, email photos & location to [reed@sawcak.org](mailto:reed@sawcak.org), or call (907) 500-7171

### **Prevent spread**

Don't buy or plant ornamental jewelweed! Avoid walking through patches of jewelweed. Clean boots and check clothing and pets for seeds if you do pass through an infestation. Share this information with your community, gardeners, and horticulturists.

### **Pull by hand**

Hand-pulling can be an effective method of control. Be careful to remove the entire root system. Ornamental jewelweed can regrow from the lowest node on the stem. If there are no flowers, it is safe to compost or burn, otherwise place in garbage bags and dispose. **Do not pull once the seed pods develop!**

### **Mechanical removal**

You can cut or weed whack plants before flowering. Trim the plants below the lowest node on the stem and repeat as needed throughout the growing season.

### **Herbicide**

Herbicides can help kill small plants that are hard to pull. Spray before flowering. **Always follow herbicide label instructions.** See AK DEC's Pesticide Control Program for more information on herbicide use and regulations.

## IDENTIFICATION

Stems: hollow, jointed, green tinged with red. Can grow up to 8 feet tall! The stem base and exposed roots are often more red than green.

Leaves: arranged opposite or whorled in groups of three. Elliptical or egg-like shape with fine serrations along the leaf edge. Leaves are green and sometimes have a red central vein and/or purplish tint along their edges.



Flowers: white, pink, or purplish-pink and trumpet shaped. They begin to bloom in mid-July through September.



Seeds: The seed pod is large and droplet-shaped with a point on the end. Each mature seed pod contains 4-16 brown seeds that are approximately 4-7 mm long (about the size of a small bead).



## WHY IS IT A PROBLEM?

It reproduces and spreads quickly, in part because of explosive seed pods

The shallow root system does not stabilize slopes and banks, contributing to riverbank erosion once it takes over a riparian area.

It reduces available light and space for native riparian plant species.

It has a lot of nectar and attracts pollinators, which reduces pollination of native species.



## FUN FACTS

We have a native *Impatiens* species, called the touch-me-not balsam. It has yellow flowers and alternate leaves (ornamental jewelweed leaves are opposite or whorled).

Each plant can produce up to 800 seeds, which can be dispersed up to 23 feet from the explosive pods!

In its native range, jewelweed is traditionally used in curries. The flowers can also be made into jams. However, it has high calcium oxalate levels and should be consumed in moderation.

In the past, jewelweed was marketed as a novelty flower for kids called "Mr. Noisy's Exploding Plant".

For more information on ornamental jewelweed and other invasive plants in Southeast AK, go to:

[bit.ly/SEAKinvasives](https://bit.ly/SEAKinvasives)



Funded by the US Forest Service and Copper River Watershed Project - thank you!

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