

Ajuga reptans Bugleweed, Carpet Bugleweed¹

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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 (Figure 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.



Figure 1. Bugleweed.

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

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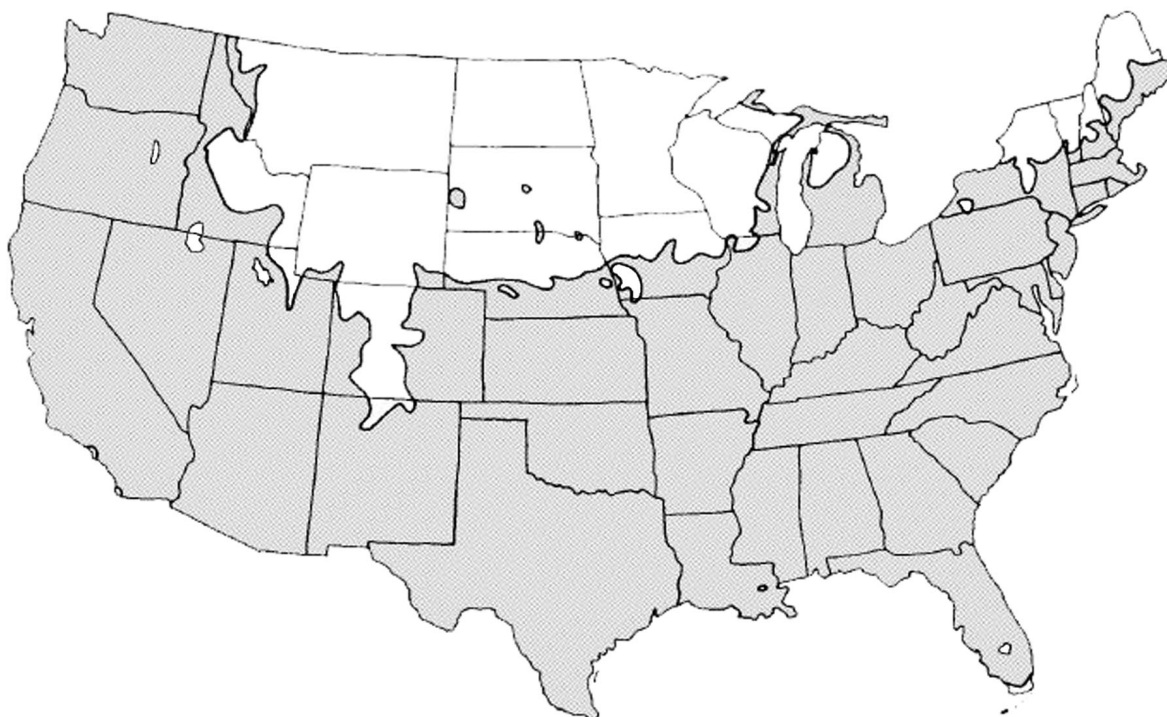


Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

Description

Height: 0 to 0.5 feet

Spread: 0.5 to 1 feet

Plant habit: prostrate (flat)

Plant density: dense

Growth rate: slow

Texture: medium

Foliage

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 tolerance: 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.

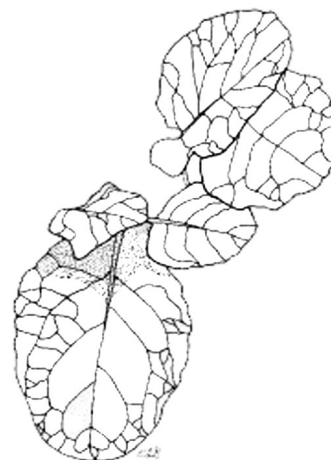


Figure 3. Foliage of Bugleweed.

Pests and Diseases

Crown rot can occur on soggy soils.