

*Impatiens biflora*

[Synonyms : *Impatiens aurella*, *Impatiens capensis*, *Impatiens fulva*, *Impatiens noli-tangere* ssp. *biflora*, *Impatiens nortonii*]

**ORANGE BALSAM** is an annual. Native to North America it has small spurred, reddish-brown spotted, orange-yellow flowers.

It is also known as *Apelsinbalsamin* (Swedish), Balsam, Balsam-weed, Brook celandine, Celandine, Cowslip, Crowing cock, Ear drop, Ear jewel, Fireplant, Foxglove, Horns of plenty, Jack-jump-up-and-kiss-me, Jewel weed, *Kanadensiskt springkorn* (Swedish), Kicking colt, Kicking horses, Lady's eardrops, Lady's earrings, Lady's pocket, Lady's slipper, *Orangefarbenes Springkraut* (German), Orange touch-me-not, Pocket drop, Shining grass, Silver cap, Silver leaf, Silver weed, Slipper weed, Snapdragon, Snapweed, Solentine, Somerset, Speckled jewels, Spotted jewelweed, Spotted snapweed, Spotted touch-me-not, Sullentine, Touch-me-not, Weathercock, Wild balsam, Wild celandine, Wild lady's slipper, and Wild touch-me-not.

The flowers attract humming birds as well as bees and other insects. The fruit pods when mature burst at the slightest pressure to expel the seeds.

Warning – strong doses can cause vomiting.

*Biflora* is derived from Latin *bi-* (two) and *-flora* (flowered) components.

Some North American Indian tribes called the species Crowing cock as a description of the flower's shape.

Orange balsam will give an orange-yellow dye that was familiar to several North American Indian tribes, including the Menominee and Potawatomi. Some of the Chippewa Indians obtained a yellow dye by adding rusty nails when processing the plant.

Apart from its inclusion as an ingredient in a ceremonial potion taken by the Cherokee Indians, orange balsam was also a source of medicine for various North American tribes. The Potawatomi used it to treat colds and some stomach upsets, the Iroquois prescribed it as a remedy for fever, kidney problems, urinary ailments, fluid retention and sore eyelids, and the Cherokee used it during childbirth and in the treatment of measles. Both the Cherokee and Potawatomi tribes applied it to poison ivy rashes, and the latter (as well as the Meskwaki Indians) also put it on nettle stings. It was turned to for treating burns, cuts and bruises by the Nanticoke, Penobscot and Mohican Indians, and the Potawatomi also applied it to bruising. The Omaha Indians used it to heal eczema, and the Iroquois, Shinnecock, Chippewa and Cherokee tribes treated general skin problems with the plant – the latter believing that it was particularly suitable for babies' skin. It was a Micmac and Malecite remedy for jaundice, and some of the Chippewa used orange balsam for easing headaches.

Medicinally, herbalists used to recommend the plant for treating asthma and jaundice, and in North America it was used in remedies for the blistering and rashes caused by poison ivy. Today it is still recognized in folk medicine as a treatment for the effects of both poison ivy and poison oak, as well as for some skin diseases, sprains, burns, stings, insect bites and ringworm. Recent scientific research appears to have confirmed the fungicidal qualities for which orange balsam has been used.