

Invasive Species Alert

Himalayan Balsam

(*Impatiens glandulifera*)

Detected in Michigan

Identification:

- Grows between 3 and 6 feet tall
- Purple/red stems are smooth and hollow
- 5-10 flowers on each stems
- 5 petals per flower-purple, pink, or white in color
- Fruit capsules explode when ripe and touched

Habitat: Himalayan balsam is an herbaceous, terrestrial, annual plant that thrives in riparian zones. It can be found in wetlands, forests, gardens, yards, and on the side of the road. This species can tolerate many types of soils.



Photo: Jan Samanek, Bugwood.org



Photo: Francine McDonald,
Ontario's Invading Species
Program

Native Range: Himalayan region of Asia

U.S. Distribution: Has been introduced to northern states on the east coast as well as the west coast, including Montana and Idaho

Local concern: Himalayan balsam competes heavily with native species and alters the behavior and composition of pollinating insects. Additionally, this species can alter water flow at high densities which increases the risk of erosion and flooding.

Other Common Names: Ornamental jewelweed, touch-me-not, Indian jewelweed, policeman's helmet

Native look-alikes and how you can tell them apart from Himalayan balsam:

- ✓ **Jewelweed or spotted touch-me-not (*Impatiens capensis*):** Yellow to orange flowers much smaller in size, leaf blades more rounded with fewer serrations.
- ✓ **Pale touch-me-not (*impatiens pallida*):** Yellow flowers. Leaf blades more rounded, with fewer serrations.

To report this species, visit www.michigan.gov/invasivespecies for contact information. Report online at www.misin.msu.edu or download the MISIN smartphone app and report it from your phone