

Ajuga reptans: Common Bugle, Bugleweed, Carpet Bugleweed¹

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Ajuga reptans

[View Assessment](#)

North, Central, South

High Invasion Risk

Predicted to be invasive and not recommended by IFAS. Will be reassessed every 10 years. In particular cases, this species may be considered for use under specific management practices that have been approved by the IFAS Invasive Plant Working Group.

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. 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 2. Leaf—*Ajuga reptans*: common bugle, bugleweed, carpet bugleweed.

Credit: Edward F. Gilman, UF/IFAS

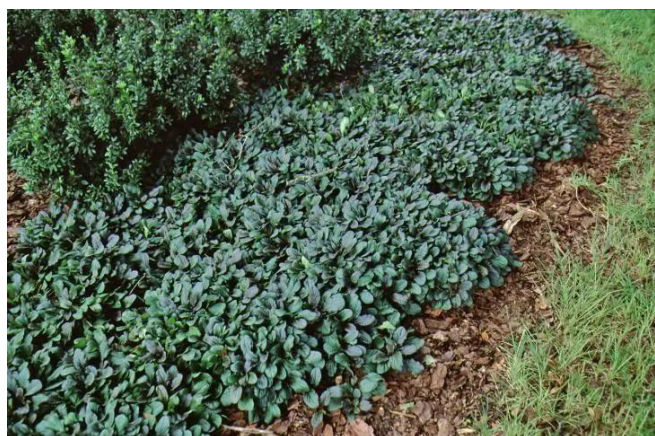


Figure 1. Full form—*Ajuga reptans*: common bugle, bugleweed, carpet bugleweed.

Credit: Edward F. Gilman, UF/IFAS



Figure 3. Flower—*Ajuga reptans*: common bugle, bugleweed, carpet bugleweed.

Credit: Edward F. Gilman, UF/IFAS

General Information

Scientific name: *Ajuga reptans*

Pronunciation: uh-JOO-guh REP-tanz

Common name(s): Common bugle, bugleweed, carpet bugleweed

Family: *Lamiaceae*

Plant type: ground cover; perennial; herbaceous

USDA hardiness zones: 4 through 10A (Figure 4)

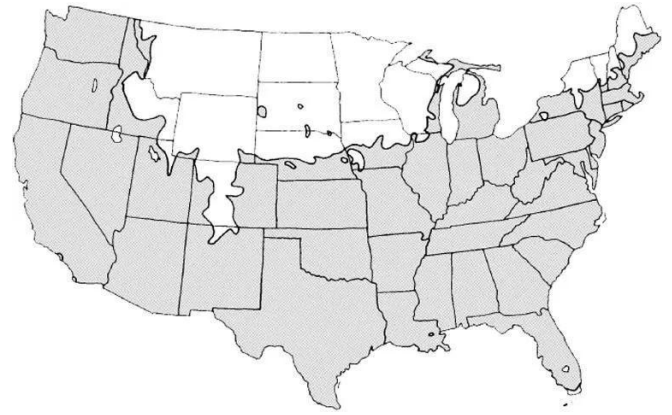


Figure 4. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

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: native to Africa, temperate Asia, and Europe

Invasive potential: invasive and not recommended by UF/IFAS faculty (reassess in 10 years)

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

Description

Height: 0 to 1/2 feet

Spread: 1/2 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

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, bugleweed 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.

Design Considerations

The low-growing habit and small leaves of the bugleweed cover the ground in a thick, lush layer of green, perfect for filling in among other plants in the landscape. Simple forms and light green or smooth foliage of companion plants will highlight the rough, scrubby texture of the bugleweed foliage. Clumping plants with larger glossy leaves or strap-blade leaves would also contrast well with the matting, low-growing form. The mass of green works well with different flower colors, but bright and light colors will show the best compared to the dark green and purple-colored foliage. Simple small or medium size flowers will contrast with the tiny foliage without adding too much detail. Colors in the variegated foliage varieties are primarily warm colors, contrasting flowers would include blues and purples or a simple color palette can be used by repeating the same warm colors with yellow, pink, or red flowers in companion plants.

Pests and Diseases

Crown rot can occur on soggy soils.

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