*Impatiens pallida* Nutt. Jewelweed; Pale Touch-me-not; Touch-me-not

**BALSAMINACEAE (Touch-me-not Family)**

**Blooming season:**
Midsummer to early fall.

**Plant:**
0.5 - 2.5 m high, much branched annual with juicy watery stems.

**Leaves:**
Alternate, thin, ovate, blunt toothed, 2.5 - 7.5 cm long.
Bright medium green.
Seedlings have paired, round, pale green leaves.

**Flower:**
Lemon yellow, often (ours are) spotted with red or reddish brown, especially on the lip, although there are several color forms (Rickett 1966 Part 2).
Bilaterally symmetrical, roughly snapdragon shape. 3 petals with 2 of them cleft into 2 unequal lobes forming the lip. 3 sepals - 2 being small and green and the third lemon yellow, large and forming a sack or funnel, ending in a spur.
The spur is bent at 90 degrees (or little more), pointing down and is about 1/4 the length of the sack/funnel.
Flowers are held horizontally on pendant stalks.
Cleistogamous flowers can form late in the season (House Part 1).

**Fruit:**
The fruit is an oblong capsule, which explodes when ripe (or when handled at near maturity), shooting seeds out, leaving 5 spiraled valves.
Ripens late summer through fall.

**Can be confused with:**
*Impatiens capensis* or spotted touch-me-not, also called jewelweed, which has an orange base color and a recurved spur facing the sack/funnel opening (not downward).
Impatiens pallida Nutt.
Jewelweed; Pale Touch-me-not; Touch-me-not

Geographic range:
Type specimen location:
State: Mostly the southern third of Michigan.
Regional: Quebec west to Saskatchewan, south to North Carolina, Tennessee, Missouri.

Habitat:
Local: Riparian.
Regional: Swamps, stream-sides, ditches, lakeshore,” wet spots in woods; often in somewhat disturbed areas, including excavations” (Voss 1985, pg. 556).

Common local companions:
Sedges, rushes, and other wetland plants

Usages:
Human: The fresh juice has traditionally been used to ease nettle stings, skin rashes, and poison ivy, and as a wart remedy. Impatiens balsamina, a closely related species appears in the pharmacopoeia for use against fungal infections; its active ingredient is 2-methyl-naphthoquinone. Kids enjoy exploding the capsules.
Animal: Seeds are eaten by birds, and hummingbirds visit the flowers for nectar.

Why is it called that?
Impatiens for the explosive ripe seed capsules; pallida meaning pale, referring to its yellow color (versus the orange of I. capensis). The common name of touch-me-not again refers to its capsules.

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