

## Plant of the Month: **Jewelweed**

1. Spotted Jewelweed, Orange Jewelweed, Spotted Touch-Me-Not (*Impatiens capensis*)
2. Yellow Jewelweed, Pale Jewelweed, Pale Touch-Me-Not (*Impatiens pallida*) ... may look white as it gets older.

**Edible:** NO. It is claimed to be edible, but one must cook most parts of it to remove the potentially harmful compounds it contains before eating it. Jewelweed contains calcium oxalate crystals which can cause severe adverse reactions, including liver and kidney damage, coma, and death. This is best to leave as food for the bees – see the picture below!

**Medicinal (internally): NO**

**Medicinal (topically): YES**

**Parts Used:** Leaves, Juice from the Stems

**Habitat:** Moist soil; along roadsides, bike trails, creeks, rivers, etc.

- Crush leaves and/or stems to create a poultice to apply to the skin that has been in contact with Poison Ivy, Poison Oak, or other rash causing plants.
- Helps alleviate the symptoms after rash occurs as well.
- A spray or salve can be made for future use. For best efficacy, use the plant before it flowers, as the stems become too dry after it flowers. The spray can be used as a preventative before possible exposure or used after exposure.

### Sprays & Salves:

- For the spray, fill a clean glass jar with chopped or crushed stems (can use a food processor). Fill the jar to cover the surface of the plant material with witch hazel. Cover jar with a lid. Let sit for 2-4 weeks in a dark, cool location. Strain out plant material and fill a spray bottle(s).
- For the oil (or salve), fill a clean glass jar with dried leaves and dried stems. Fill the jar with extra virgin olive oil or grapeseed oil to cover by about an inch above your plant material to help prevent it from getting moldy. Other plants can be added like dried plantain, dried calendula and/or dried comfrey. Place jar with a sock on it to block out the light in a sunny location for a 2-4 weeks (or longer). Strain out plant material and fill a clean jar with prepared oil. Add a few drops of Vitamin E oil to prepared oil to serve as a natural preservative. ADVANCED: Use beeswax to make a salve.



Photos taken August 27, 2017 near Yough Lake (Somerset County, PA)

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