

did you know?

Serious impatiens threat

Impatiens downy mildew (*Plasmopara obducens*), which began wiping out impatiens (*Impatiens walleriana*) in Europe a few years ago, is now a problem for plants in the United States and Southern Canada. East and West Coast gardeners have reported entire beds, sometimes filled with hundreds or thousands of impatiens, dying in weeks. Foliage turns pale green or yellow, and a whitish growth appears on the underside of leaves as edges curl downward. Spores spread quickly when plants are wet or moist on cool nights, and soon, all that's left standing are stems.

Since there are no effective chemical controls, take action right away if you notice any of these signs. If you suspect your impatiens are infected, send away all the debris and roots, and don't plant impatiens in that bed again for several years. Instead, try New Guinea impatiens (*Impatiens hawkeri*) or wax begonia (*Begonia semperflorens*) in that spot.