

Bugle



Bugle is a common herb that grows in large clumps. Its flowers are deep purple-blue (on occasion pink or white) and are arranged on flower stalks that narrow to a point. The bugle flowers are hollow and lipped in appearance. The shiny, oval-shaped leaves (similar to those of spinach) are dark in colour – often purple-brown or even violet when seen against a dark green ground colour. They have dots on their underside. Bugle is found in damp, broadleaved woodlands and other shaded habitats, and in damp meadows.

Bugle weed is also known as gypsy weed, sweet bugle, water bugle and ‘thunder and lightning’, which refers to the contrast between the shiny highlights and deep background colour of the leaves. The common name ‘bugle’ is thought to derive from ‘*bugula*’, which may be a corruption of the Latin name ‘*Ajuga*’.

Sow in spring or autumn in a cold frame (under glass). Put the seedlings into individual pots when they are large enough to handle. Grow them in the cold frame or under glass for their first year. Plant them out into their permanent positions in early summer.

In spring or autumn, larger clumps can be replanted into their permanent positions, though it is best to pot up smaller clumps and grow them on in a cold frame until they are rooting well. Plant them out in spring.

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