

## BALSAM LEAF SPOT

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A serious leaf spot disease of garden balsam (*Impatiens balsami*) was observed in a commercial plastic greenhouse in New Jersey while I was on sabbatic leave. The plants were crowded together on the ground where the humidity was quite high. Dark brown circular lesions of various sizes were present on infected leaves. Light tan, circular areas developed in the center of the older lesions and joining of lesions was common (see photo). Isolations from the brown lesions yielded a fungus identified as *Stemphylium botryosum* Wallr. This fungus had not been reported on species of *Impatiens* in the United States but had been reported on garden balsam in Canada.

Annual phlox (*Phlox drummondii*) growing in the same greenhouse, had similar spots. Isolations from these spots also yielded *Stemphylium* spores. This leaf spot had been previously reported. Greenhouse and laboratory studies confirmed that both plants were attacked by the same fungus.

Further investigations showed that this disease is favored by high humidity and crowded conditions. Also, since the fungus can infect more than one species of bedding plants, the opportunity for spore build-up is increased.

Control was obtained by reducing the humidity,  
proper spacing of plants and weekly applications of  
ferbam at the rate of 2 lbs. per 100 gallons.



Stemphylium leaf spot on garden balsam.