



## Emerald Goddess Gardens

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Botanical Name	<i>Ajuga x tenori</i>
Common Name	Bugleweed, Chocolate Chip or Valfredda or Carpetweed.
Mature Size	2 to 4 Inches
Bloom Color	Blue
Bloom Period	Late Spring to early summer
Boom Form	Spire
Water	Moderate, maintain uniform soil moisture.
Light	Requires shade.
USDA Zone	4 to 9
Fragrance	None
Uses	Ground Cover, Pots, Walls, Rock Gardens, Shade Garden, Turf Replacement for shaded areas.
Special Features	Low growing, low maintenance prostrate ground cover
Grower Notes	Leaf color intensifies in cooler weather and higher light levels.



**Chocolate Chip Bugleweed** is a type of **Ajuga**, which is a fairly large genus of the *Mint* or *Lamiaceae* Family, made predominately low growing, spreading ground cover plants with blue flowers. This particular cultivar was developed in Europe by *Valfredda Nursery* in Italy, where it is known as **Ajuga x tenori** or **Valfredda**. It has smaller, more narrow leaves than many other types in a dark olive toned green that blushes purple to chocolate brown.

Overall it grows lower, slower, and more dense, maturing at only about 2 to 4 inches tall, and is easier to contain and much better behaved, and resistant than other types as well, is cold hardy (USDA Recommends Zones 4-9) and has a multitude of versatile and interesting uses.

Use **Chocolate Chip Bugleweed** as a low maintenance, easy care ground cover, a replacement for turf grass in shady areas, as edging and filler for paths and stepping stones, incorporate into mixed perennial beds, mixed garden pots, or raised planters or baskets. It is an excellent choice for the deeply shaded areas where other ground covers fail. Once well established it can be mowed and trimmed much as grass would be.

Masses of short spikey spires of medium to pale blue flowers appear in the late spring and make a truly stunning visual display. Although the plant will withstand foot traffic, well, when in bloom the flower spikes raise the overall height to 4 to 5 inches, which can be problematic in high traffic areas.

For the best results with **Chocolate Chip Bugleweed**:

- Plant in fertile, well draining soil. Amend planting area with high quality compost as may be needed.
- Locate in light to dense shade. (Expect leaf color and bloom to decrease with light levels).
- Space 6-9 inches apart for quick cover.
- Best flowering and leaf color are in bright, but cool light. Locations that receive hot, direct sun should be avoided.
- Supply supplemental irrigation. Plant is somewhat drought tolerant once very well established, but best appearance is with consistent soil moisture.
- Reasonable resistant. Monitor for signs of fungus during hot, humid, wet summer weather and treat accordingly.

For quick answers to your growing or planting questions, just email us at [service@emeraldgoddessgardens.com](mailto:service@emeraldgoddessgardens.com)  
If you don't know your USDA Planting Zone, you can check the map on our website site at [emeraldgoddessgardens.com](http://emeraldgoddessgardens.com)

## Care of Your New Shade Garden Plant

Here are a few basic guidelines for handling and caring for your new plant:

Check the recommended USDA Zone Range for the plant. Many gardeners are able to successfully grow plants outside their recommended Zones, but this is dependent upon providing the type of environment and care the plant needs.

- Immediately plant or repot the new plant into a prepared bed or a 6 inch to 10 inch diameter pot that can drain easily and thoroughly.
- Use a good quality commercial potting media.
- Apply a high quality, slow release plant food according to the label directions. Do not use hot, all chemical fertilizers like 6-6-6 or 10-10-10.
- Locate in light to moderate shade. This plant must be protected from hot, direct afternoon sun.
- Maintain consistent and uniform moisture in the soil. Take care not to over water.
- Packing crystals may be reused to conserve water, but do so with caution as they hold 6000 times their weight in water. If reusing the crystals, mix and incorporate them thoroughly throughout the potting media.
- Be sure the pot can drain and that the bottom of the pot does not sit submerged in water for more than a few hours.
- Supplement feed with a water soluble plant food every 2-3 weeks according to the label directions.
- Prune or pinch lightly and often when the plant is young and actively growing to strengthen the central stalk and encourage branching and build uniform shape.
- Monitor for signs of disease or insects and treat accordingly.
- Protect from frost and freeze, as even cold tolerant plants can be damaged by cold, and tropicals will perform better, flower earlier, and live longer within their Zone Range when protected from cold temperatures.

Many tropical and subtropical plants can be grown as potted plants indefinitely, and can be successfully wintered over, or adapted to growing indoors year round in colder climates, so long as they are moved indoors well ahead of temps into the 30°F's, are maintained in warm environment (minimum 40°F) with adequate, full spectrum light, consistent soil moisture is maintained, and any pest or disease issue are promptly and properly addressed.

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