

# Stop

# The Invasion



Photographs courtesy of  
Tim Miller, Washington State  
Noxious Weed Control Board

## Butterfly Bush

*Buddleia davidii*

## Report Sightings

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[invasivespecies.wa.gov](http://invasivespecies.wa.gov)

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### What is it?

The butterfly bush is a perennial, woody shrub with purple flowers. It is a very popular ornamental plant, often found in gardens. It also is common along riverbanks and river gravel bars where it out-competes native plants and alters soil nutrients.

### Is it here yet?

Yes. Escaped, invasive populations of butterfly bush are pervasive in western Washington, including Clallam, Clark, Cowlitz, King, Lewis, Skagit, Snohomish, Thurston, and Whatcom counties.

### Why should I care?

Butterfly bushes form dense, shrubby thickets that exclude all other plants and displace native vegetation such as willows. They can supplant other plants as nectar sources and thus reduce their pollination. Its name notwithstanding, the bush likely affects negatively native butterfly populations. Once established, it is difficult to remove because it re-sprouts very easily.

### What should I do if I find one?

Do not purchase, plant, or trade this species. Contact your county noxious weed coordinator at [http://www.nwcb.wa.gov/nwcb\\_county.htm](http://www.nwcb.wa.gov/nwcb_county.htm). Report online at [www.invasivespecies.wa.gov/report.shtml](http://www.invasivespecies.wa.gov/report.shtml).

### How can we stop it?

Replace a butterfly bush growing in a garden with native plants, or at the least, deadhead it to prevent seeds from spreading. The butterfly bush is listed as a Class B Noxious Weeds in Washington, meaning it is designated for control in certain state regions (See <http://www.nwcb.wa.gov/searchResults.asp?class=B>).



Photograph courtesy of Forest & Kim Starr, U.S. Geological Survey, Bugwood.org

## What are its characteristics?

- It is a deciduous shrubs with arching branches that can reach a height of 15 feet.
- The leaves and stems are typically hairy and often are green or blue-gray above and whitish on the underside, due to the fuzzy hairs.
- Leaf stalks are short and hairy, although the leaves sometimes attach directly to the stem.
- It has small, fragrant flowers that are white to deep purple, with an orange-yellow inside.
- Flowers cluster together in groups that may be 4-10 inches long.

## Where do I get more information?

- Center for Invasive Species and Ecosystem Health: [www.invasive.org/species/subject.cfm?sub=11608](http://www.invasive.org/species/subject.cfm?sub=11608)
- U.S. Forest Service: [www.na.fs.fed.us/fhp/invasive\\_plants/weeds/butterfly\\_bush.pdf](http://www.na.fs.fed.us/fhp/invasive_plants/weeds/butterfly_bush.pdf)
- Washington State Noxious Weed Control Board: <http://www.nwcb.wa.gov/detail.asp?weed=15>
- Washington State University Extension: [your.kingcounty.gov/dnrp/library/water-and-land/weeds/Brochures/butterfly\\_bush\\_wsueextension\\_eb2007e.pdf](http://your.kingcounty.gov/dnrp/library/water-and-land/weeds/Brochures/butterfly_bush_wsueextension_eb2007e.pdf)

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