



HOW TO CARE FOR YOUR BUTTERFLY BUSH

Butterfly bush (*Buddleia davidii*) is, as would be expected from its name, a magnet for butterflies. It is native to China, where it is referred to as the 'summer lilac' because of their similar flowers. It is a great central point in a garden, and is prized for its large, colorful blooms late in the season.

If your butterfly bush isn't leafing out along with all of your other plants and doesn't produce flowers as soon as you expected, don't worry. *Buddleia* is late to leaf out and is also a late bloomer, flowering in late summer-early fall, around the same time as Rose of Sharon.

Butterfly bush will thrive in full sun, but will grow in light shade. It prefers a fertile, well-drained soil, but is very drought tolerant, so it can take some dryness.

Butterfly bush's growth habit is irregular in shape, but can be pruned to shape. They have long, cone-shaped blooms that are white, purple, red or pink. They can get 6'-12' tall and 4'-12' wide, but can also be pruned heavily to control its size.

It can be pruned so heavily that many gardeners treat it as an herbaceous perennial and prune it all the way to the ground during its winter dormancy. However, how far you cut the plant down depends on your climate. If you are in an area with heavy snow, it is best to cut the plant to about 3 feet above the ground and mulch over it. The blooms that come from new growth tend to be larger and more frequent.

If you'd prefer not to cut your plant back so heavily, removal of the older, woody stems each year would be very beneficial. To extend bloom time, deadhead your butterfly bush to encourage more blooms throughout the season.

