



Buddleja davidii

WA – Class B Noxious Weed, Prohibited Plant List

OR – Class B Noxious Weed

Butterfly Bush

Summer Lilac, Orange Eye

Family: Buddlejaceae

Origins: Native to China, Butterfly Bush has escaped cultivation across the United States, Great Britain, and British Columbia. In Washington, several counties have noted escaped populations of Butterfly Bush, especially along roadsides and railroads.

Range: Found throughout the United States.

Habitat: Commonly cultivated as a garden ornamental, Butterfly Bush also grows near roadsides, riverbanks, gravel bars, and disturbed areas. It is capable of establishing in a low-nutrient substrate and is drought tolerant.

Impact: Butterfly Bush forms dense thickets that discourage native vegetation, especially along river banks and gravel bars. Once established, it is difficult to control and has the ability to re-sprout basal roots from cut branches left on the ground. Butterfly Bush reaches maturity in less than one year, producing up to 3 million seeds per plant. Seeds are easily dispersed by the wind and water and can remain viable for five years.

Description: Butterfly Bush is a large, deciduous shrub with arching branches reaching a height of 15 feet. Flower clusters form upright or nodding spikes or cones at the end of stems, reaching a length between 4 to 10 inches. Individual flowers have four petals and are commonly purple with an orange center. Fragrant flowers bloom in mid-summer.

The leaves are oppositely arranged, lance-shaped or egg-shaped, and may reach 10 inches long and 1 to 3 inches wide. Leaves are green to blue-gray above and whitish below due to small fuzzy hairs. Young stems are green, while older stems have peeling, gray-brown bark. Small, brown-winged capsules hold an abundance of seeds.

Common Look-Alikes: Common Lilac, California Lilac.

**Butterfly Bush is not known to be toxic.*



Integrated Pest Management - Control Methods

Integrated Pest Management (IPM) combines various methods such as mechanical, cultural, biological, and chemical controls to manage pests. IPM offers the possibility of improving the efficiency of pest control while reducing its negative environmental impacts. For more information, see the Cowlitz County Noxious Weed's IPM Resources & Strategy Guide or contact your local Noxious Weed Control Board to develop a customized IPM plan.

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Non-Herbicide Control

Mechanical (pulling, cutting, digging, etc.)	Remove and dispose of flower heads before the formation of seeds. Cutting alone is not effective; Butterfly Bush will quickly re-sprout when cut at the base, and branches can develop basal roots if left on the ground under certain conditions. Properly dispose of cut plant parts in the trash. Young shrubs can be dug up, although this is not recommended for well-established populations.
Cultural	Consider alternative plants for your landscape, such as California or Common Lilacs, which are showy shrubs that attract butterflies and bees and grow in both shade and sun.
Biological	Goats will eat Butterfly Bush and can damage it. However, they will not kill or eradicate this plant.

Herbicide Control: Cut Stump Treatment

Glyphosate (Rodeo, Killzall, Kleenup, Roundup)	Timing: Spring to the growing plant before flowers are in full bloom. Remarks: Cut the trunk off at the base and immediately apply concentrated Glyphosate to the freshly cut surface; refer to the label for use in aquatic areas.
Imazapyr (Imazapyr, Arsenal, Habitat)	Timing: Spring to the growing plant before flowers are in full bloom. Remarks: Cut the trunk off at the base and immediately apply concentrated Imazapyr to the freshly cut surface; refer to the label for use near tree species; refer to the label for use in aquatic areas.

* Cowlitz County Noxious Weed Control Board does not endorse any product or brand name. Brand names are listed as an example only. Other commercial products may contain the listed active chemical for herbicide control. Always read and follow the safety protocols and rate recommendations on the herbicide label. **The Label is The Law.**

This control sheet includes excerpts from the Written Findings of the Washington State Noxious Weed Control Board (WSNWCB), nwcb.wa.gov. Herbicide information from the PNW Weed Management Handbook (ISBN 978-1-931979-22-1) and product labels.