

Common Butterfly Bush

Buddleja davidii

Plants · In flower Jul–Sep



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A vigorous deciduous shrub with long arching stems, narrow grey-green leaves and dense tapering spikes of small, honey-scented lilac-purple flowers with an orange eye. Introduced from China, buddleia has naturalised widely and grows on walls, railway sidings, derelict buildings, riverbanks and waste ground around Dumfries.

BEHAVIOUR

The flowers are exceptionally attractive to butterflies — peacocks, small tortoiseshells, red admirals and painted ladies all crowd onto them in August — which is where the name comes from. But it is also genuinely invasive: it seeds prolifically into masonry, and the roots split mortar, damage walls and bridges and displace native vegetation on riverbanks and shingle.

WHEN TO SEE IT

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QUICK FACTS

FAMILY	Figworts (Scrophulariaceae)
HEIGHT	Up to 5 m
STATUS	Introduced and invasive; damages masonry, but valuable to butterflies

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