

Invasive Plants of the Eastern United States

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Swearingen, J., K. Reshetiloff, B. Slattery, and S. Zwicker. 2002. Plant Invaders of Mid-Atlantic Natural Areas. National Park Service and U.S. Fish &amp; Wildlife Service, 82 pp.

**Butterfly Bush***Buddleja* species

Butterfly bush species from Asia and Central America are popular ornamental plants widely used to attract butterflies. There are more than 100 species of *Buddleja* worldwide and additional cultivars are being developed. *Buddleja* species are currently found throughout the eastern, southern and western states. Butterfly bush can escape from plantings and become invasive in a variety of natural habitats such as coastal forest edges, roadsides, abandoned railroads, rural dumps, stream and river banks and some disturbed habitats. *Buddleja* displace native plants. It spreads by seed that is produced in abundance and dispersed by the wind.



Britt Slattery, USFWS

**Prevention and Control**

On isolated ornamental shrubs, cut off fading flowers before seed forms. Hand weed young plants or use a glyphosate herbicide. However, disturbance caused by removal often results in new plants. To achieve total removal, it is best to ensure a rapid ground cover of a non-invasive species, which will prevent butterfly bush from re-establishing.

**Native Alternatives**

butterflyweed (*Asclepias tuberosa*), sweet pepperbush (*Clethra alnifolia*), Virginia sweetspire (*Itea virginica*), blazing star (*Liatris spicata*), New York ironweed (*Vernonia noveboracensis*)

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