

Butterfly Bushes

What a welcome sight in late summer! Just when the rest of your garden is starting to pass its prime, these butterfly magnets refresh your yard with gorgeous clusters of honey-scented flowers. Colors can range from the deep, dark purple of 'Black Knight' to the reddish-purple of 'Attraction' to the soft lavender of 'Lochinch'.



The leaf color of butterfly bushes, which are botanically known as *Buddleia davidii*, can also vary: from basic medium green, to silvery-green (as seen slightly in the picture of 'Lochinch' below), to a variegated variety of chartreuse-yellow and green called 'Santana'.



Late to emerge in the spring, don't be surprised if you seem to have twigs instead of new growth until the end of May and beginning of June. In our area butterfly bushes frequently die back to the ground, so go ahead and trim in late, late fall or early spring to about 12". It will quickly grow to its normal height, ranging from five to ten feet depending on the variety, by late summer.



Plant your butterfly bush in full sun with fertile, moist, well-drained soil and wait for the butterfly spectacular to start!



To prolong the show, you should dead-head any spent flowers by snipping the clusters off above a new set of branches. (Typically, a new set of flowers clusters has already begun growing just below the spent one.)

These photos appear courtesy of Walters Gardens, Inc. and Proven Winners.