



## Managing Butterfly Bush

### Cut it Back or “Deadhead”

Since Washington State declared Butterfly Bush (*Buddleja davidii*) a noxious weed in 2006, many gardeners have chosen to remove their plants and find alternative plants that are just as lovely, but behave better in the landscape. If you are a gardener who chose to keep your *Buddleja*, pruning it back severely in the fall (12-15” tall) will make for a more manageable plant size and make it easier in following seasons to deadhead the flowers after blooming. This keeps them from spreading seed. And while it may not look as though your *Buddleja* is producing seedlings close to the “mother plant”, the seeds are tiny (3 million per plant) and are often carried off by wind currents, water, birds, and other critters to our natural areas, parks, and waterways. Some seeds can travel up to 40 miles from the mother plant! The plants that make it to those natural areas are reproducing unnoticed (and exponentially) and this is changing ecosystem functions. Please prune your plants back and deadhead those pretty flowers. Even better, remove the buddleja altogether and select a different plant for that spot in your garden.



If you would like a free booklet on suggested alternatives for *Buddleja* and other invasive ornamental plants, please contact the Whatcom County Noxious Weed Board for a free copy of “GardenWise: Non-Invasive Plants for Your Garden” or see it online at: <http://www.nwcb.wa.gov/education/education.htm>

[LBaldwin@co.whatcom.wa.us](mailto:LBaldwin@co.whatcom.wa.us) or call 360-715-7470.