

# Buddleia

*Buddleja davidii*



## Identification

- Deciduous shrub 1-5 m tall
- Four-sided branches
- Leaves 10 to 30 cm, dark green on top, pale with white downy hairs underneath
- The 30 cm flower heads are made up of small scented flowers from Dec to Feb
- Flowers usually pale purple with an orange centre, but can range from white to crimson



Buddleia flowers and leaves Photo: C. Howell (DOC)



Buddleia seedling Photo: Jon Sullivan

## Control

If you have buddleia in your garden, particularly if you live near a river or stream with open banks, consider replacing it. Small plants can be pulled or dug out. Larger plants develop a tenacious root system and can be difficult to remove. Cut stumps will readily regrow unless treated with herbicide. For more details on buddleia control see the Weedbusters website: [www.weedbusters.co.nz](http://www.weedbusters.co.nz)

Use all herbicides in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and ensure no herbicide comes into contact with other plants, the soil or waterways.

## Where is it found?

Buddleia was a popular garden tree, planted to attract butterflies. In the wild it colonises areas of bare or disturbed ground. It thrives particularly well in riverbeds and water margins.

## Why is it a problem?

Buddleia grows quickly and has lots of small seeds which are widely spread by the wind. Buddleia can also tolerate extreme conditions, particularly poor soil, and will readily form dense infestations. It is a particularly serious weed in braided riverbeds as it can change the water flows and displace all other vegetation. Buddleia is also a problem for forestry industry as it out-competes young seedlings.

## Similar species

There are concerns that South African buddleja (*Buddleja salvifolia*) is a potential weed.



South African buddleja Photo: C. Howell (DOC)