

# History & Fun Facts

All of the plants we sell are native to the Ohio area. That means they are adapted and ready to be a beautiful, worry free, addition to your yard!



Here are some additional tips to promote butterfly appearances in your garden:

- Leave residual healthy vegetation throughout the winter that may contain overwintering butterfly pupa or larva.
- Plant in full sun as butterflies need the sun for orientation and warmth.
- Place a small amount of rotten fruit around your garden which can be used as food for some species.
- Avoid lawn insecticides and herbicides.
- Provide areas sheltered from the wind



## PPGSA

The Plant Pathology Graduate Student Association (PPGSA) is a non-profit organization. Funding of the activities are provided through volunteer-based activities, such as charities. PPGSA is not an official part of the Ohio State University, but will nonetheless respect many of the bylaws laid forth by the Council of Graduate Students (CGS) when appropriate.

These fliers are brought to you by our Outreach Committee. The main function of this committee is to both create a greater student awareness and understanding of plant pathology in order to broaden the numbers of future plant pathologists in our department and across the country as well as to increase community awareness of the general nature of plant pathology.



## THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF FOOD, AGRICULTURAL,  
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Dept. of Plant Pathology

# Butterfly Weed



# Common Problems

It is important to know the common problems different plants in your garden may experience so that you can better manage the issues and ensure your plants are providing the ascetics you desire.

Downy Mildew, caused by a water mold, is one of the biggest threats to your butterfly bush. Symptoms of this disease are grayish brown angular lesions that are often delimited by the veins. Signs of this problem develop on the underside of leaves as whitish, downy fungal growth.

Spider mites can also be a problem when the plants are drought stressed.



The image on the left illustrates symptoms of downy mildew on

## Plant Requirements and Description

### Mature Height and Spread:

2 feet tall

### Growth Rate:

Fast

### Light Requirement:

Full Sun

### Other Requirements:

Well drained soil

Soil pH of 6.0-7.0

Planting space 1-3'

### Description:

These plants have a long, summer blooming period that can last from June through October if they are deadheaded. The peak bloom is between July and August. For proper deadheading, remove the spent panicles before they go to seed using a pair of pruners. This removal will encourage new blooms.

Annual pruning of these bushes to within one foot of the ground will also enhance flower display. Pruning should be done in the spring before new growth begins. Fall or winter pruning will increase the risk of cold damage and should be avoided.

Butterfly bushes, once established, are quite drought tolerant, winter hardy, and require little fertilization. If cold damage occurs the plants will die back to the crown but will re-sprout vigorously.

## Management

- For Downy Mildew: Sanitation is key in managing this disease. Be sure to sanitize pruning tools between each cut to prevent accidental spread. Also, clean up infected plant debris and remove infected plant part as the fungal like organism overwinters in this refuge. By removing the survival source you will limit the primary inoculum on next year's growth.
- For Downy Mildew: If you can control the water you can control the disease. Water mold spores can swim to find new host tissue to infect. To prevent water buildup on leaves water in the late afternoon or change from overhead watering to drip irrigation. Also make sure that your plants are properly spaced and pruned to prevent crowding in the canopy. If the canopy is crowded, moisture and humidity will build up preventing the sun from drying your plant's leaves.
- For mites: gently shake the branches of the bush to dislodge the insects or use a strong spray of water. Avoid using insecticides as this will also hurt the desired butterflies.

## Sources

- <http://www.prairiemoon.com/seeds/wildflowers-forbs/asclepias-tuberosa-butterfly-weed.html>
- <http://www.gardenguides.com/128592-butterfly-bush-disease.html>
- <http://www.clemson.edu/extension/hgic/plants/landscape/shrubs/hgic1084.html>
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- <http://homeguides.sfgate.com/butterfly-bush-diseases-insects-72828.html>

