

Tried and True Native Plants To Replace Invasive Plants

Best Bets: Plants
for Particular Uses
in the Mid-Atlantic

INVASIVE PLANT:

Butterfly Bush (*Buddleia davidii*)



Master Gardeners of Northern Virginia
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Also known as Summer Lilac, this ornamental shrub was introduced from its native range in China in the early 1900s. Although sometimes recommended for butterfly gardens, it does not serve as a host plant for their larvae. It is planted so extensively that it commonly escapes from gardens and is invasive through much of the U. S., including Arlington and Alexandria in Northern Virginia.

Problems	Butterfly Bush & New Jersey Tea
Escapes from plantings to aggressively invade natural habitats, displacing native plants	
Forms dense, shrubby thickets along stream banks and disturbed areas	
Supplants other plants as nectar sources and reduces their pollination	
Spreads by abundant seed dispersed by wind	
Must be religiously deadheaded	
Sterile cultivars revert to fertile state over time	
Desired Characteristics	
Shrub or perennial supporting butterflies	
Native Alternatives	
<i>Asclepias tuberosa</i> (Butterfly-weed)	
<i>Baptisia australis</i> (Blue Wild Indigo)	
<i>Ceanothus americanus</i> (New Jersey Tea)	
<i>Cephalanthus occidentalis</i> (Buttonbush)	
<i>Clethra alnifolia</i> (Sweet Pepperbush)	
<i>Itea virginica</i> (Virginia Sweetspire)	
<i>Liatis spicata</i> (Blazing Star / Gayfeather)	
<i>Lindera benzoin</i> (Spicebush)	
<i>Spiraea alba</i> (Narrowleaf Meadowsweet)	
<i>Spiraea tomentosa</i> (Steeplebush)	
<i>Vernonia noveboracensis</i> (New York Ironweed)	
developed by Master Gardeners of Northern Virginia, serving Arlington and Alexandria	

Images by Elaine Mills, Arlington