

## Butterfly Bush

Butterfly bush, summer lilac

Botanical Name: *Buddleia*

family: Loganiaceae

The name “buddleia” is for the Rev. Adam Beedle, a rector in Essex, England. So many ministers in England became interested in botany because the isolated locations of many churches gave them time to study and do botanical research. They were called horticultural clergy. Their belief was that in studying plants they would have a better understanding of God’s universe and the innocence of Eden.



In 1708, Beedle wrote an *Herbarium* of British plants. His writing supported the botanical systems of John Ray and Joseph de Tournefort. Though an expert on mosses, Linnaeus named the shrub *Buddleia globosa*, after Adam Beedle. The Buddleia bush came from Peru in 1774. Few can survive in English winters, but some may be found in older English gardens as favorites because of their globular golden flowers.



The most popular buddleia is named for Armand David, *Buddleia davidii*, a Jesuit missionary in China, but Pere Jean Andre Soulie discovered it. Dr. Augustine Henry, an Irish customs officer in Shanghai sent the shrub to Kew Gardens in 1887.

Buddleia’s common name, Butterfly bush, is so named because butterflies land on the lavender flowers to enjoy the sweet nectar. It is said the lilac-like flowers cannot be seen for all of the butterflies enjoying the plant.

*100 flowers and How They got Their Names*  
by Diana Wells