

Buddleia

Chrysalis Series

Grow and sell this new compact buddleia in the same year for an abundance of flowers.

BY CHRIS FIFIO

The launch of the new Chrysalis series of *Buddleia davidii* is one of our biggest introductions of the season. Darwin Perennials is thrilled to offer this first-year flowering option to growers.

Chrysalis can be produced without vernalization and sold in spring with a profusion of flowers. This is a departure from traditional overwintering production, and brings this class to greenhouses looking for buddleia that bulks up fast, branches very well, and is in-bloom for the consumer from early summer through fall.

The new Chrysalis series also provides all this on a unique compact habit. The bushy and upright container habit makes it extremely “shoppable” in retail stores, as the plants fit and display very well on racks or benches during the excitement of the spring season.

If you need help scheduling your program, be sure to use the First Year Flowering Tool at www.firstyearfloweringtool.com. Here are a few additional culture guidelines for successful spring production:

PROPAGATION

When buddleia Chrysalis cuttings arrive, give them a quick evaluation. Watch for box temperatures that exceed 65° F, which could impede cutting quality. Condensation within the bag could also mean the cuttings have lost some of their moisture during shipping. Inspecting for spider mites is another evaluation (buddleia are susceptible). A hand lens gives you a close look at

the undersides of the leaves and helps you control bringing pests into your production.

You’re looking for a nice, turgid cutting. Buddleia can be a bit leafy, but generally root nicely. When sticking, I prefer a slightly higher pH for buddleia growing media: EC 0.8/pH 5.8-6.2. I also prefer a loose-filled media — Elle plugs could slow down rooting for this crop. I do endorse the use of rooting hormone at a rate of 500-ppm IBA.

The media should be medium-wet (not saturated) with a soil temperature of 70 to 72° F. After sticking, I like to use Pageant fungicide to help reduce the stress in cuttings and hasten the rooting. Another critical point for propagation is buddleia benefit from long days — day extension or night interruption during winter months.

Monitor your moisture at this stage, too. Avoid mist cycles that will saturate the media; this will delay or inhibit rooting. You want to get the cuttings hydrated with a moderate mist cycle, but then reduce mist and only apply as much mist is necessary to prevent wilt. Again, avoid media saturation — you’ll lose more cuttings to soil being too wet than too dry.

For fertilization, keep this pretty low before transplant — only 50- to 75-ppm nitrogen starting at day 7. Low salts give the cuttings nice, toned growth. Give them one soft pinch before transplant and that’s really going to give you tremendous branching on this buddleia series. Transplant occurs 42 to 49 days after sticking.



TRANSPLANT TO FINISH

What I love about the new Chrysalis series is that it doesn't require vernalization to get that full flower power in its first year. Growing warm (62° F) with long days will bring these into flower the quickest. Below 60° F will greatly increase the time to flower. Growers in southern regions can have these in flower in early March; northern climates closer to mid to late April.

Before transplanting, inspect again for spider mites. Make sure you're clear of pests at this stage, as any indication could be challenging down the line.

I like to give buddleia a second pinch at transplant, slightly higher than the first. This will increase the branching and the flower power at finish. This can be easily done with a trimming machine, but I always carry a pair of scissors in my pocket just in case.

Buddleia Chrysalis can be transplanted into 1-gallon pots (one plant per pot) or 2- to 3-gallon pots (three plants per pot). Provide a media pH of 5.8 to 6.2 with light levels at 5,000 to 8,000 foot-candles.

Maintain temperature at 65 to 76° F days and 56 to 64° F nights.

Use a balanced fertilizer at a rate of 150- to 175-ppm nitrogen with moderate watering. PGRs are generally not needed, as this is a compact series. One-gallon pots are ready eight to 10 weeks after transplant and 2- to 3-gallon pots need a little more time at 10 to 12 weeks.

IN THE GARDEN

Soon, consumers will enjoy budding, blooming buddleia Chrysalis through October. When placed in the landscape, this compactness increases its overall use, as it won't

overpower its space. This makes Chrysalis perfect for garden borders, or even mixed combos and hanging basket applications.

No matter where it's placed, Chrysalis will provide continuous flowering and attract butterflies and other pollinators. Plants are tolerant

of rain and resist downy mildew. In addition, they have a high drought tolerance once established. There are five colors launching in the series – Blue, Purple, White, Cranberry and Pink.

For more education on growing buddleia Chrysalis visit video training

archives at www.darwinperennials.com/university. [gpn](#)

Chris Fifo is the perennial product representative for Darwin Perennials and Kieft Seed. For additional information, go to www.darwinperennials.com.



Brightening THE WORLD



SHARE THE BEAUTY OF SUNPATIENS®

The original and trusted brand in sun-loving, heat-loving impatiens, SunPatiens®, thrive in full sun or part shade and deliver continuous color from spring through frost. Whether used in baskets, window boxes, patio pots or in the landscape, these beautiful, low-maintenance plants flourish almost anywhere. Learn more at: **SunPatiens.com**



**WIDE
RANGE OF
COLORS**



**THRIVES IN
SUN OR
SHADE**



**A HOME
GARDENER
FAVORITE**



SAKATA®

SakataOrnamentals.com

Together We Flourish

Visit SunPatiens at

