

Buddleja 'Blue Chip' Release Notice

Buddleja 'Blue Chip' was derived from open pollination of NC2003-7 in October 2003. NC2003-7 was derived from open-pollinated seed collected in November 2002 from a family created by hybridization between *Buddleja* 'Honeycomb' (*Buddleja globosa* x *Buddleja davidii*) with a *Buddleja* interspecific hybrid (*Buddleja davidii* var. *nanhoensis* 'Nanho Purple' x *Buddleja lindleyana*). This cross was made in summer 2001. NC2003-7 was selected for its compact growth habit, but it showed limited flower production. Female fertility of NC2003-7 was low, but some seed were obtained via open pollination and 10 progeny were grown out in summer 2004. One seedling, NC2004-9, subsequently named 'Blue Chip', demonstrated highly branched, very compact growth (Figure 1). In 2005, 'Blue Chip' was tested in a replicated trial at the Sandhills Research Station at Jackson Springs, NC, and in a non-replicated trial at the Horticultural Field Laboratory in Raleigh, NC. It attained a height and spread of only about 19 and 39cm respectively in one year (Table 1). Foliage was very dense and full. Typically, commercially available *Buddleja* cultivars are very vigorous, with growth of 1 to 1.5m in one year not unusual. Flower color is a beautiful medium violet-'Blue' (90B using the Royal Horticulture Society Colour Chart). The inflorescences are very dense and shortened as compared to the typical elongated inflorescence of *Buddleja* (Figure 2). Flowers of 'Blue Chip' are very fragrant, atypical of *Buddleja lindleyana* which lack fragrance, but typical of *Buddleja davidii*. Foliage of 'Blue Chip' is semi-evergreen, showing retention into winter similar to *Buddleja lindleyana*. The compact growth habit and dense foliage of 'Blue Chip' are highly desirable traits that will allow this selection to be used in a wide range of landscape situations. These characters also create opportunities for using *Buddleja* as a greenhouse pot plant.

'Blue Chip' produces small, distorted anthers, and shows no evidence of pollen production. Although 'Blue Chip' does show evidence of seed production in a field setting, it appears to be considerably less than that of other *Buddleja* cultivars. A summary of the characteristics of 'Blue Chip' is shown on the attached sheet. 'Blue Chip' can be propagated easily from stem cuttings derived from actively growing stock plants.

Table 1. Average height and width of ‘Blue Chip’ and check cultivars. Data taken October 11, 2005 from one-year-old plants grown at the Sandhills Research Station, Jackson Springs, NC . All plants were propagated from stem cuttings in fall, 2004, grown in 1 gallon pots overwinter in a greenhouse, and planted in the field April, 2005.

Selection or cultivar	Average height (cm) ^z	Average width (cm)
Honeycomb	52.0a	62.5
Ellen's ‘Blue	40.3abc	54.3
White Profusion	43.0abc	61.5
Lochinch	41.6bcd	52.7
Attraction	40.0bcde	53.0
Pink Delight	37.0cde	52.0
NC2003-22 ('Miss Ruby')	32.0e	47.2
‘Blue Chip’ (‘Blue Chip’)	18.8f	38.6

^z Mean comparison by Duncan's Multiple Range Test, P = .05.



Figure 1. Compact growth and dense foliage of *Buddleja* 'Blue Chip'. One -year-old plant.



Figure 2. Inflorescence of *Buddleja* 'Blue Chip'.