Common Purple Lilac

Tree Type

This flowering shrub is deciduous and loses its foliage for the winter.

Planting

This shrub can be used as border plants, hedges or windbreaks. Refer to back for best planting practices for your bareroot.

Watering

Once established, the lilac will tolerate occasional drought but would benefit from supplemental watering. Refer to watering guidelines on back for specific watering directions.

Pruning

Common Purple Lilac is very low maintenance beyond annual pruning just after the blooming period. To prevent spreading, cut off the suckers that appear around the plant. Renewal pruning ensures bountiful bloom.

Preferences

Purple Lilac prefers full sun meaning is needs at least 6 hours of direct, unfiltered sun. Any lower than that will affect the blooms. It can grow in moist but well-drained, loamy, sandy, clay, alkaline to neutral soils.

Attributes

Common Purple Lilac grows to a height of 12 to 16 ft with a width of 8 to 12 ft at maturity. Lilacs generally have a medium growth rate of 13 to 24 in. a year in optimal growing conditions. They grow as multi-stemmed, oval, upright shrubs with blooms that are extremely fragrant and reliable. The light purple florets borne in 4 to 8 in. panicles bloom in April or May on the previous year's growth. The lilac can be cut down to the ground and start blooming as soon as 1 to 2 years.

Wildlife Value

The suckers of the lilac provide quality cover for numerous birds and animals but the fruit, however, has little benefit for wildlife. The flowers attract butterflies, hummingbirds, and bees and the leaves provide food for caterpillars. The leaves provide little value to other browsers.

When newly planted trees go without enough water, growth slows to a crawl. This delays establishment and may even lead to the death of leaves, branches, roots or the whole tree.

For the most part, trees can only take up water from soil that is in direct contact with roots. Even in the best conditions, newly transplanted trees use water from a relatively small volume of soil. To make matters worse, roots of bare root, balled & burlaped, and spaded trees are cut during transplanting.

Within two to three days after spring or summer planting, the soil around the roots of trees dries enough to impede root growth. Newly transplanted trees in the Midwest benefit from daily watering for the first one to two weeks. Apply 1 to 1½ gallons of water for each inch of trunk diameter. After that, water trees every two to three days for the next two to three months and then weekly until established. The more closely you match your watering frequency to the optimum, the quicker trees become established.
Reduce watering in cool, cloudy, or wet weather if the soil is poorly drained (soil drains less than 3/4 inches per hour). Eliminate daily irrigation in poorly drained soil.
After it rains, stop watering until the rainwater drains from the soil. Stop watering in the autumn once leaves fall from trees.

Mulch reduces evaporation and conserves water. An investment in frequent watering helps insure against tree death and the cost of replanting trees.