Common Butterbur

Petasites hybridus

Height: 3 feet

Spread: 4 feet

Spacing: 4 feet

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 4

Other Names: Fuki, Bog Rhubarb



Common Butterbur
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder



Common Butterbur foliage
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Ornamental Features

Common Butterbur's attractive enormous round leaves remain green in color throughout the season on a plant with an upright spreading habit of growth. It features bold spikes of shell pink flowers rising above the foliage in early spring, which emerge from distinctive rose flower buds before the leaves. The purple stems are very colorful and add to the overall interest of the plant.

Landscape Attributes

Common Butterbur is a dense herbaceous perennial with an upright spreading habit of growth. Its wonderfully bold, coarse texture can be very effective in a balanced garden composition.

This is a high maintenance plant that will require regular care and upkeep, and should be cut back in late fall in preparation for winter. Gardeners should be aware of the following characteristic(s) that may warrant special consideration;

- Invasive

Common Butterbur is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Mass Planting
- Groundcover
- Naturalizing And Woodland Gardens
- Bog Gardens

Planting & Growing

Common Butterbur will grow to be about 3 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 4 feet. When grown in masses or used as a bedding plant, individual plants should be spaced approximately 4 feet apart. It grows at a fast rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 20 years. As an herbaceous perennial, this plant will usually die back to the crown each winter, and will regrow from the base each spring. Be careful not to disturb the crown in late winter when it may not be readily seen!

This plant does best in full sun to partial shade. It prefers to grow in moist to wet soil, and will even tolerate some standing water. It may require supplemental watering during periods of drought or extended heat. It is not particular as to soil type or pH. It is highly tolerant of urban pollution and will even thrive in inner city environments. This species is not originally from North America, and parts of it are known to be toxic to humans and animals, so care should be exercised in planting it around children and pets. It can be propagated by division.