

BUDDLEJA ALTERNIFOLIA (SCROPHULARIACEAE) NATURALIZED IN NEW MEXICO

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ABSTRACT

Buddleja alternifolia Maxim. is reported here as new to the flora of New Mexico. A large stand of naturalized plants was discovered adjacent to a dirt road in San Miguel County, near the foundations of an old mill known as El Molino. Photographs of the naturalized plants are provided.

In 2014, a naturalized population of roughly 50 plants of *Buddleja alternifolia* Maxim. (fountain butterfly-bush) was documented in San Miguel Co., New Mexico (Figs. 1 and 2). Shrubs of the species occurred along both shoulders of County Road B-52, within Alamitos Canyon. The largest plants occurred along and adjacent to the road shoulder, while smaller plants extended onto a terrace near a dry wash and up the hillside into pinyon-juniper woodland. The population is near the foundations of an old mill known as El Molino, and in general the area bears signs of past disturbance.

Voucher specimen. New Mexico. San Miguel Co.: County Road B-52, ca. 1.8 mi N of Highway 50, ca. 2.4 mi WNW of Pecos, roughly 50 plants of all demographics on road shoulder and extending into the pinyon-juniper woodland about 30 meters, 9 Sep 2014, *Embrey 178* (ARIZ).



Figure 1. Naturalized *Buddleja alternifolia* in San Miguel Co., New Mexico. At the time of the photos were taken (2014), plants occurred on both sides of the road, and extended in all directions.



Figure 2. Flowering branch of *Buddleja alternifolia*, San Miguel Co., New Mexico.

Photographic evidence suggests that a few *Buddleja alternifolia* shrubs were present on the road shoulder in the early 1990's and have since expanded outwards (unpublished photographs).

Buddleja alternifolia is native and endemic to China, where it grows in thickets along river banks and dry river beds (Li & Leeuwenberg 1996). The provisional publication of the genus treatment for *Buddleja* in the Flora of North America North of Mexico does not include *B. alternifolia* (Norman 2012), but in the USA it previously has been reported as naturalized in North Carolina and Pennsylvania (Kartesz 2015). This is the first report of this species in New Mexico (SEINet 2018; Allred & Ivey 2012).

Although *Buddleja alternifolia* is available commercially, how it arrived at the current location is a mystery. The New Mexico location is at the lower end (6a) of the USDA hardiness zones recommended for this plant, reported as zones 5-9 (Missouri Botanical Garden 2018; USDA 2018).

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