



## **Sugar Shack® Buttonbush** **(*Cephalanthus occidentalis* ‘SMCOSS’)**

Cultivar of Buttonbush, USDA Hardiness Zones 5-9

Buttonbush (*Cephalanthus occidentalis*) is a compact, low-maintenance shrub, native to New England. It is best known for its spherical inflorescences in early to mid-summer. The blooms are composed of many tubular flowers which are slightly fragrant and highly attractive to pollinators. Glossy, dark green leaves turn to burgundy each fall while seed heads provide visual interest well into winter. This cultivar, Sugar Shack®, is a dwarf selection of that will grow to be four feet tall and four feet wide.

Buttonbush will thrive in full sun to partial shade, flowering best in sunnier exposures. It is especially well-suited to wet soils and performs exceptionally in low-lying areas or sites with poor drainage. After planting, regular watering is important in drought conditions. Pruning requirements are minimal. Since *Cephalanthus* flowers on new growth, pruning should be done in late winter to shape the plant or remove dead wood. The oldest stems can be pruned out to rejuvenate flower production. This plant does not have any major pest or disease problems. At the Arnold Arboretum, masses of buttonbush can be found around Faxon Pond and the meandering Goldsmith Brook.

Carefully unpack your plant and choose a location that is full-sun to part-shade and protected from foot traffic. Gently tease apart the roots to encourage them to spread outward. Be sure to plant at the correct depth. The top of the root system should be level with the soil surface. The depth of the hole should accommodate the height of the roots and the bottom should be left undisturbed to prevent settling. The width of the hole should be generally two times the width of the roots. This loosened soil will encourage root growth. After planting, water your plant well and apply a 1-inch layer of mulch over the area, keeping mulch away from the main stems. Water again after mulching, continue to monitor the soil within the root system, and prevent it from drying out until established.