

Create a Butterfly Garden

Butterflies play their role in their relative ecosystem as pollinators and as food for various species, and along with other birds, animals and insects their habitats have been destroyed in various ways. It's worth including plants to attract and support them in your habitat even if all you get to see is the beauty of all those lovely creatures. Designing and developing a butterfly garden is guided by knowing your native butterfly species' particular needs for all life stages of the butterfly:

- Places to lay eggs
- Food plants for caterpillars
- Places to form chrysalides
- Nectar sources for adult butterflies

PLANNING OUT YOUR GARDEN

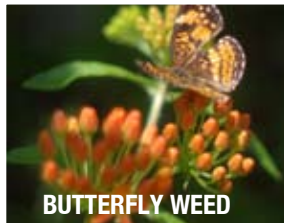
- Nearly all adult butterflies are attracted to red, yellow, orange, pink and purple flowers that are flat-topped or clustered and have short flower tubes.
- You don't need to cluster your butterfly plants together in a single garden, you can easily mingle them among other plants and butterflies will find them.
- Incorporate as many native plants into your garden as possible to ensure butterflies have the foods they evolved to eat.
- Plants should bloom successively so that there is always something blooming and nectar available to the butterflies.
- Adults generally only feed in the sun, so you want to plan for sunny areas only, full sun from mid-morning to mid-afternoon.
- Caterpillars from each butterfly species eat from different plants, and planting them ensures a future generation in your habitat.

A FEW COMMON NATIVE PLANTS

Like the butterflies, these plants are native across most of North America.



DAME'S ROCKET



BUTTERFLY WEED



MILKWEED



JOE-PYE WEED



GOLDENROD

A FEW COMMON BUTTERFLIES

These butterflies are common to most of North America and are good species to start with.



A few other things all butterflies will appreciate:

- Set out watering dishes: a flat container filled with pebbles or medium-sized rocks, pour water so that it fills in around the rocks but does not cover them.
- Provide a "puddle" for butterflies to congregate as a shallow pan that contains coarse sand, settled into the soil in your yard, and kept moist.
- Include flat rocks or other flat areas in sunny areas for them to rest and warm their wings.

SOME RESOURCES FOR NATIVE PLANTS AND BUTTERFLY IDENTIFICATION

GARDENS WITH WINGS: www.gardenswithwings.com/identify-butterflies.html

LADYBIRD JOHNSON WILDFLOWER CENTER: www.wildflower.org/explore.php

USING NATIVE PLANTS: www.nwf.org/How-to-Help/Garden-for-Wildlife/Gardening-Tips/Using-Native-Plants.aspx

BUTTERFLY FOOD: www.thebutterflysite.com/butterfly-food.shtml

BUTTERFLY IDENTIFICATION GUIDE: www.discoverlife.org/mp/20q?guide=Butterflies

NATIONAL WILDLIFE FEDERATION GARDENING FOR WILDLIFE: www.nwf.org/How-to-Help/Garden-for-Wildlife.aspx

Information provided by www.TheCreativeCat.net in "Your Backyard Wildlife Habitat: Planning a Butterfly Garden". All text and images copyright © Bernadette E. Kazmarski