

Native Plant Sources

Many of these are native plants. However, cultivars or related non-native species are often also available and may not be as useful as a nectar source. Some thistles are also valuable nectar sources, but avoid invasive species.

Asters	Bee Balm
Black-eyed Susan	Butterfly Weed
Coreopsis	Goldenrod
Joe-Pye Weed	Lavender
Liatris	Milkweeds
Herbs	Phlox
Purple Coneflower	Sedum
Sunflower Butterfly	Yarrow
Bush	Caryopteris
Other	Shrub

Native Plant Sources

- Buckeye:** snapdragons
- Great Spangled Fritillary:** violets
- Monarch:** milkweeds, butterfly weed
- Orange Sulfur:** alfalfa, clover
- Painted Lady:** mallow, thistle, ironweed
- Pearl Crescent:** native asters
- Red Admiral:** nettles
- Spring/Summer Azure:** dogwood, viburnum Swallowtail, Black: parsley, dill, carrot
- Swallowtail, Tiger:** wild cherry, poplar,
- Others Viceroy:** willow, plum, poplar, apple

We hope this information encourages you to plant and enjoy a butterfly garden.

For more information on gardening please visit:
<https://extension.illinois.edu/global/horticulture>
 or
 call University of Illinois Extension Knox County
 309-342-5108

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Other information brochures can be found online at <https://extension.illinois.edu/hkmw/gardening-and-nature-brochures>

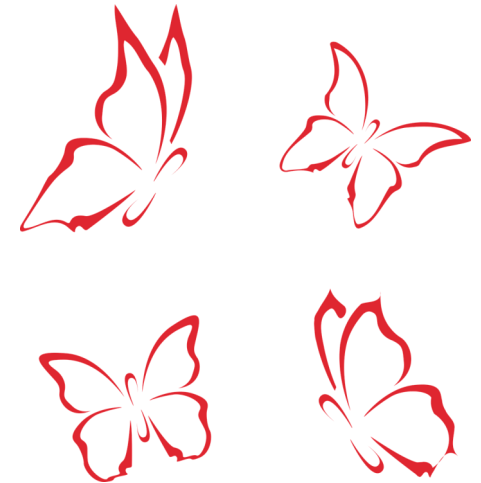
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Flying Flowers: Attracting Butterflies to Your Garden



Garden Tips from Knox County Master Gardeners



Butterflies are beautiful and fascinating to watch. Kids of all ages are entranced by the transformation of a fat ugly caterpillar (although some are quite striking) to a graceful delicate butterfly. In addition to exposing children to nature and providing enjoyment, butterflies also help pollinate some plants.

However, many species are being threatened by the destruction of their native habitat. Even in a small space, we can provide a little oasis in our yard to help provide butterflies with what they need to survive.

What You Can Do

We often associate butterflies with colorful flowers, but to create a complete habitat you must meet their needs for growth and development at all stages of their life cycle.

Adult butterflies lay eggs on host plants that will provide food for the larva. The larva or caterpillar eats the leaves of the plant and grows, and then searches for a quiet place to hide as it forms a chrysalis and enters a resting or pupal stage. Finally the adult butterfly emerges, feeds on nectar (or other sources) and mates, and the cycle begins again.

Butterflies need shelter, sunlight, water, and food for both adults and larva. The more of these you can provide, the more butterflies you will attract and the longer they will stay. Providing a variety of plants will attract different species. Try to avoid using insecticides - butterflies are vulnerable at all stages of development.

Butterflies appreciate having everything they need in the same area rather than searching for plants scattered throughout the yard. Place host plants next to or intermingle with nectar plants, and add flat rocks and a puddle or shallow pool of water. Place garden in a sunny area sheltered by larger plants or structures to provide protection from strong winds. Design a butterfly garden in the shape of a butterfly. Whatever you do, place it where you can see and enjoy the butterflies.

Shelter

Butterflies don't fly at night, or during cold, wet, or cloudy weather and need a sheltered place to rest. Sheltered spots are also needed for the larva to form a chrysalis and for butterflies that overwinter in different stages of the life cycle.

Butterflies seek shelter under leaves, in tree crevices, under bark, or in brush or log piles. If you have room, set aside a portion of your yard and allow it to be a little "wild". If there are no disease problems, leave litter and dead plants until spring - you might be destroying an overwintering chrysalis along with the plant. There is little evidence to suggest that butterflies actually use structures sold as butterfly houses.

Sunlight & Water

Butterflies are cold-blooded - they must warm their bodies before they can fly. Place flat stones, boards, or logs where they can bask and soak up the sun.

Butterflies prefer shallow puddles to deep water. In addition to obtaining moisture from puddles, they also extract minerals which are important to males for mating.

To provide butterflies with the moisture and minerals they need, sink a container in the ground, fill with sand mixed with a bit of soil, and add water to the top of the sand. Place a few small rocks or twigs in the container for butterflies to perch on.

Food for Larvae

Caterpillars are picky eaters - each species requires a specific plant (or limited variety). Host plants include trees and shrubs as well as flowers and "weeds". If you want a complete butterfly garden, you will have to accept some damage to host plants - their purpose is to supply food for larvae. Place in a less conspicuous spot or plant a few extra.

Food for Adults

Adults will use a variety of nectar sources, but something should always be available throughout the growing season. Different species are in different stages at different times. For example, some overwinter in the pupal stage, emerge as adults in the spring, and need a nectar source at this time, while others are in the adult stage at the end of the season. In addition to nectar, some species also feed on overripe or rotting fruit.

Preferred color depends to some extent on the species, but providing a variety of bright colors will attract a number of species. Fragrance also helps butterflies locate nectar plants.

Plant varieties with single and short tubular flowers. Flowers with double petals often have less nectar (zinnias are an exception). Also, many modern hybrids are bred for showy flowers, not for nectar or fragrance. Large or composite flowers or flowers in clusters on sturdy stems provide a spot to land and support larger butterflies.

Planting in large blocks of a single color, rather than scattering individual plants throughout the garden, makes it easier for butterflies to find nectar plants. Keep plants deadheaded for continued bloom. Annuals will bloom all summer and provide a steady supply of nectar. Finally, use native plants - native butterflies have developed a relationship with them and may recognize them more readily.

Annual Nectar Plants

Ageratum	Alyssum
Cosmos	Heliotrope
Lantana	Marigold
Pentas	Petunia
Statice	Tithonia
Verbena	Zinnia