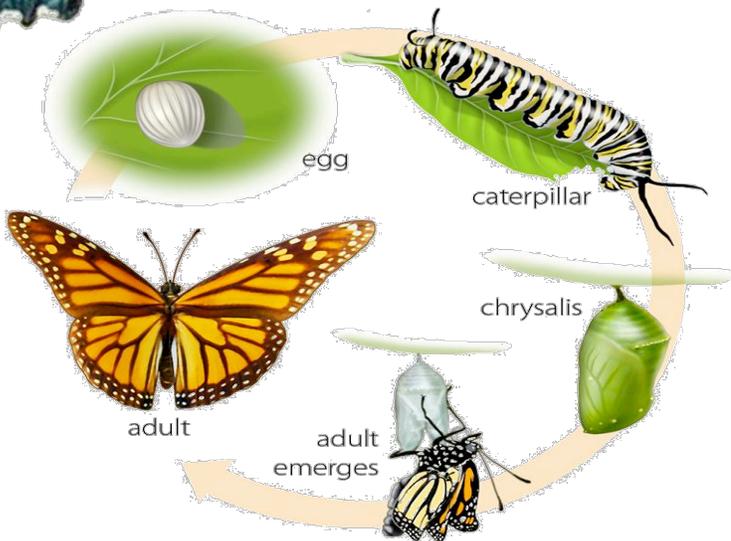




Today in the Garden
June 3, 2016

Attracting Butterflies to Your Garden



Attracting Butterflies

Brightly colored butterflies can be a welcome addition to your wildlife garden, not only because of their beauty, but also because of their usefulness in pollinating flowers.

Attracting butterflies involves incorporating plants that serve the needs of all life stages of the butterfly. The insects need places to lay eggs, food plants for their larvae (caterpillars), places to form chrysalides and nectar sources for adults.

When you create a pollinator garden and certify it with National Wildlife Federation, it also counts towards the Million Pollinator Garden Challenge.



Butterfly Garden Necessities

- **Plant native flowering plants** - Because many butterflies and **native flowering plants** have co-evolved over time and depend on each other for survival and reproduction, it is particularly important to install native flowering plants local to your geographic area. Native plants provide butterflies with the nectar or foliage they need as adults and caterpillars. The Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center has lists of **recommended native plants by region and state**.
- **Plant type and color is important** - Adult butterflies are attracted to red, yellow, orange, pink and purple blossoms that are flat-topped or clustered and have short flower tubes.
- **Plant good nectar sources in the sun** - Your key butterfly nectar source plants should receive full sun from mid-morning to mid-afternoon. Butterfly adults generally feed only in the sun. If sun is limited in your landscape, try adding butterfly nectar sources to the vegetable garden.
- **Plant for continuous bloom** - Butterflies need nectar throughout the adult phase of their life span. Try to plant so that when one plant stops blooming, another begins.
- **Say no to insecticides** - Insecticides such as malathion, Sevin, and diazinon are marketed to kill insects. Don't use these materials in or near the butterfly garden or better, anywhere on your property. Even "benign" insecticides, such as *Bacillus thuringiensis*, are lethal to butterflies (while caterpillars).
- **Feed butterfly caterpillars** - If you don't "grow" caterpillars, there will be no adults. Bringing **caterpillar foods** into your garden can greatly increase your chances of attracting

unusual and uncommon butterflies, while giving you yet another reason to plant an increasing variety of native plants. In many cases, caterpillars of a species feed on only a very limited variety of plants. Most butterfly caterpillars never cause the leaf damage we associate with some moth caterpillars such as bagworms, tent caterpillars, or gypsy moths.

- **Provide a place for butterflies to rest** - Butterflies need sun for orientation and to warm their wings for flight. Place flat stones in your garden to provide space for butterflies to rest and bask in the sun.
- **Give them a place for puddling** - Butterflies often congregate on wet sand and mud to partake in "puddling," drinking water and extracting minerals from damp puddles. Place coarse sand in a shallow pan and then insert the pan in the soil of your habitat. Make sure to keep the sand moist.

Common Butterflies and the Plants Their Caterpillars Eat

- **Acmon Blue** - buckwheat, lupines, milkvetch
- **American Painted Lady** - cudweed, everlast
- **Baird's Swallowtail** - dragon sagebrush
- **Black Swallowtail** - parsley, dill, fennel, common rue
- **Coral Hairstreak** - wild black cherry, American and chickasaw plum, black chokeberry
- **Dun Skipper** - sedges, grasses including purpletop
- **Eastern Tiger Swallowtail** - wild black cherry, ash, tulip tree, willow, sweetbay, basswood
- **Giant Swallowtail** - prickly ash, citrus, common rue, hoptree, gas plant, torchwood
- **Gray Comma** - gooseberry, azalea, elm
- **Great Purple Hairstreak** - mistletoe
- **Gulf Fritillary** - maypops, other passion vines
- **Henry's Elfin** - redbud, dahoon and yaupon hollies, maple-leaved viburnum, blueberries
- **Monarch** - milkweeds
- **Painted Lady (Cosmopolite)** - thistles, mallows, nievitas, yellow fiddleneck
- **Pygmy Blue** - saltbush, lamb's quarters, pigweed
- **Red Admiral/White Admiral** - wild cherries, black oaks, aspens, yellow and black birch
- **Silver-Spotted Skipper** - locusts, wisteria, other legumes
- **Spicebush Swallowtail** - sassafras, spicebush
- **Sulphurs** - clover, peas, vetch, alfalfa, asters
- **Variiegated Fritillary** - passion flower, maypop, violets, stonecrop, purslane
- **Viceroy** - willows, cottonwood, aspen
- **Western Tailed Blue** - vetches, milkvetches
- **Western Tiger Swallowtail** - willow, plum, alder, sycamore, hoptree, ash
- **Woodland Skipper** - grasses
- **Zebra Swallowtail** - pawpaw

Does your garden have all the elements to become a Certified Wildlife Habitat®? Certify today!

Source: <http://www.nwf.org/Garden-For-Wildlife/Wildlife/Attracting-Butterflies.aspx>

Common Nectar Plants

Flowers:

Aster (*Aster* spp.)
Black-Eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia hirta*)
Blazing Stars (*Liatris* spp.)
Butterfly Milkweed (*Asclepias tuberosa*)
Buttonbush (*Cephalanthus occidentalis*)
Cardinal Flower (*Lobelia cardinalis*)
Common Milkweed (*Asclepias syriaca*)
Coneflowers (*Echinacea purpurea*)
Coreopsis (*Coreopsis* spp.)
Cosmos (*Cosmos* spp.)
Dianthus Family (*Dianthus* spp.)
Lantana (*Lantana camara*)
Marigold (*Tagetes* spp.)
Mexican Sunflowers (*Tithonia rotundifolia*)
Petunia (*Petunia x hybrida*)
Salvia (*Salvia* spp.)
Shasta Daisy (*Leucanthemum* spp.)
Sunflower (*Helianthus* spp.)

Swamp Milkweed (*Asclepias incarnata*)
Swamp Verbena (*Verbena hastata*)
Tall Verbena (*Verbena bonariensis*)
Thistle (*Cirsium discolor*)
Violet (*Viola* spp.)
Woodland Stonecrop (*Sedum ternatum*)
Yarrow (*Achillea* spp.)
Zinnia (*Zinnia elegans*)

Shrubs:

Butterfly Bush (*Buddleia* spp.)

Vines:

Passion Flowers (*Passiflora* spp.)

Trees:

Chaste Tree (*Vitex agnus-castus*)
Flowering Dogwood (*Cornus*)

Source:

<http://www.gardenswithwings.com/what-is-a-butterfly-garden/nectar-plants.html>

