

## Attracting Butterflies

Butterflies are unique and colorful creatures. They are also delicate creatures that are cold-blooded so they require sunlight in order to warm themselves and become active. In addition, butterflies tend to avoid places with harsh winds, so make sure your site is relatively wind-free. When attracting butterflies to the garden they have five general requirements: nectar, water, supplemental food, shelter, and nesting.

Nectar is supplied by having an array of plants that bloom at different times, ensuring a year round food supply (see next page).

Butterflies obtain water and minerals by drinking at the edge of streams and rivers. Or you can fill a saucer with sand and add water until the sand is saturated; this provides a water source for butterflies.

Supplemental food can be provided in the way of fruit-feeders, which is a saucer of over-ripe fruit peeled and left off the ground. For fruit feeders, use apples, bananas, cantaloupe, cherries, figs, grapes, nectarines, paw paw, peaches, pears, persimmons, tomatoes or watermelon. Make sure they're very ripe and out of reach of other creatures. In addition to fruit, small amounts of meat can be left out for butterflies as the "meat juices" proved an important nutrient source for some butterflies. Make sure that your "meat feeder" is several feet off the ground, otherwise you'll attract more than just butterflies. However, if you are allergic to wasps or hornets this can be omitted.

Providing shade and trees gives shelter and protection to butterflies from harsh weather and predators. In order to encourage adults to stay and lay eggs, it's critical to provide plants that caterpillars can feed on. The caterpillars, once hatched will eat those plants, so keep in mind that things will be a bit "holey" as the caterpillars eat. If you love an immaculate garden you might want to focus more on feeding adults than providing fodder for the young. If you're trying to encourage the adults to reproduce it's important to NOT SPRAY PESTICIDES. Many pesticides are very general and will kill caterpillars regardless of whether they're the targets or not. In addition, spraying pesticides discourages adults from using your patch to eat. If you're trying to attract butterflies consider gardening organically or omitting the use of pesticides.

When considering what plants you're going to put in your butterfly garden determine how much time and space you want to dedicate to your butterfly garden. Also note whether you want to see them from inside your house.



**Annuals:**

Broccoli (L)  
Cabbage (L)  
Clover  
Cosmos  
Dill (L)  
French Marigold  
Heliotrope  
Lantana  
Mexican sunflower  
Nasturtium (L)  
Petunia  
Thistle  
Vetch  
Violet (L) (S)  
Zinnia

**Perennials:**

Aster  
Bee Balm (Monarda)  
Black-eyed Susan (Rudbeckia)  
Blanket flower (Gaillardia)  
Daylily (Hemerocallis) (S)  
Feather grass (Stipa)  
Fennel (L)  
Gayfeather (Liatris)  
Goldenrod (Solidago)  
Hollyhock (Alcea) (L)  
Joe Pye Weed (Eupatorium)  
Jupiter's Beard (Centranthus)  
Knotweed (Persicaria) (L)  
Lavendar (Lavandula)  
Lupine (L)  
Mallow (Malva) (L)  
Milkweed (Asclepias)  
Mint (Mentha)  
Parsley  
Phlox  
Purple coneflower (Echinacea)  
Rock cress (Arabis)  
Rock cress (Aubrieta)  
Scabiosa  
Sedum  
Shasta Daisy (Leucanthemum)

Tickseed (Coreopsis)  
Yarrow (Achillea)

**Shrubs:**

Abelia  
Bluebeard (Caryopteris)  
California lilac (Ceanothus) (L)  
Dogwood (Cornus) (L)  
Lilac (Syringa)  
Privet (Ligustrum)  
Rhododendron  
Spirea (L)

**Trees:**

Alder  
Aspen  
Birch  
Cherry (L)  
Cottonwood (L)  
Dogwood (L)  
Elm (L)  
Hawthorn (L)  
Locust (Gleditsia) (L)  
Oak (L)  
Plum  
Willow (L)

(L) = Plant for larval (caterpillar) stage  
(S) = Plant for shade