

Butterfly Gardening Info Sheet



The first thing to consider for your butterfly garden is location. The ideal spot is quiet, undisturbed, within view, exposed to the sun, and protected from wind. Butterflies are cold-blooded so they need sunlight to warm their flying muscles. Also, keep in mind that you cannot use pesticides when gardening for butterflies, so place your butterfly garden away from plants that need spraying.

It is also important that you provide water for the butterflies. Construct at least one puddle area for them because they cannot drink from open water. You can make a watering area by adding sand to a bird bath or fill a clay saucer with water. The sand will reduce the depth. A resting spot for butterflies can be provided by placing a rock in the center of the sand and water. The butterflies will drink from the moist sand, so you should not have any standing water above the sand line.

If you don't have the space in your yard for a butterfly garden, you can still attract butterflies with a few well chosen plants in a limited size container that also provides water for the butterflies.

You will need two types of plants for your butterfly garden: *nectar plants* for the adult butterflies, and *larval plants* for the caterpillar stage of the butterfly.

Selection of plants and trees for your Butterfly Garden

Flowers that attract butterflies are brightly colored, single flowers that are not too deep and wide enough to provide good perching platforms. Choose plants with staggered blooming times so that you have blooms available throughout the warm months.

Caterpillars are usually very host specific. Butterflies will only lay eggs on specific plants. The four stages of butterfly development are egg, caterpillar (larva), chrysalis (pupa) and adult.

To order chrysalis and adult butterflies call Butterfly Dan's at 1-407-847-8278.

Be sure to visit our butterfly house!

Some of our more common butterflies and their host plants:

Adult life expectancy

Monarch: milkweed	3 wks - 6 mos
Queen: milkweed	4-6 wks
Zebra Long-wing: passion vine	1-6 mos
Gulf fritillary: passion vine	1-3 wks
Julia: passion vine	10-21 days
Giant Swallowtail: Citrus, White soap	5 days-2wks
Black Swallowtail: dill, fennel, parsley	5 days -2wks
Pipevine Swallowtail: pipevine	1-2 wks
Polydamas Swallowtail: pipevine	1-3 wks
Sulphur: cassias	5-10 days
White Peacock: water hyssop (bacopa)	10 days- 2 wks
Atala: zamia	3-10 days
Buckeye: plantain (ribwort grass)	5 days - 3 wks
Painted Lady: milk thistle, hollyhock	2 wks

Some of our more common nectar plants:

Pentas (especially red)	Salvia (native and non)
Porterweed	Lantana
Firecracker	Firebush (native)
Petunia	Yarrow
Buddleia	Daisies
Gaillardia (native)	Coreopsis (native)
Mexican Heather	Verbena
Chrysanthemum	Dianthus
Ageratum	Verbena
Zinnia	Plumbago
Lobelia	Marigold

Rockledge Gardens

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