



Butterflies in the Garden

Who doesn't marvel at the sight of a Monarch or Swallowtail butterfly flitting about the garden? You can entice/lure these intriguing insects into visiting your garden regularly by providing plants that will meet their needs. Some plants provide nectar for the adult butterflies while others are food for their larvae (caterpillars). Plants eaten by caterpillars easily outgrow any "damage" that the chewing young cause. Not only cultivated plants need be considered. There are many weeds that are also beneficial food sources: tarweed, dandelion, cudweed, nettle, plantain, thistle, mallow and fennel, to name a few.

Best NECTAR Plants to Feed Butterflies

Abelia grandiflora

Aesculus californica (Buckeye)

Ageratum houstoniana (Floss flower)

Alcea rosea (Hollyhock)

Allium spp. (onion family)

Asclepias (Milkweed)

Aster spp.

Bidens (Bur Marigold)

Buddleia spp. (Butterfly Bush)

Caryopteris sp.

Ceanothus spp.

Centaurea sp. (Cornflower)

Centranthus ruber (Jupiter's Beard)

Rubus (Blackberry)

Cosmos spp.

Helianthus spp. (Sunflower)

Heliotropum arborescens

Lantana

Lavandula (Lavender)

Ligustrum spp. (Privet)

Lobularia maritime (Sweet Alyssum)

Mentha spp. (Mint)

Monarda didyma (Bee Balm)

Nepeta spp. (Catmint)

Phlox spp.

Phacelia spp. (Lantern Plant)

Plumbago auriculata (Cape Plumbago)

Rudbeckia spp. (Black Eyed Susan)

Salvia spp. (Sage- especially clevelandii)

Sedum spp.

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Continued 

Coreopsis spp.

Statice

Echinacea purpurea (Coneflower)

Syringa (Lilac)

Echinops spp. (Globe Thistle)

Tagetes spp. (Marigold)

Erigeron spp. (Fleabane)

Thymus spp. (garden thyme)

Escallonia spp.

Tithonia (Mexican Sunflower)

Best FOOD Plants for Butterfly Larvae (caterpillars)

Asters - Field Crescents

Aesculus californica (Buckeye) - Echo Spring Azure

Aristolochia californica (Pipevine) - Pipevine Swallowtail

Althea rosea (Hollyhock) - Painted Lady, Checkered Skipper, West Coast Lady

Asclepias (Milkweed) - Monarch

Ceanothus - California Tortoiseshell

Eriogonum spp. (Buckwheat) - Gray Hairstreak, Acmon Blue

Fennel (also Anise and Parsley) - Anise Swallowtail

Heteromeles (Toyon) - Echo Spring Azure

Mimulus (Monkeyflower) - Checkerspot

Passiflora (Passion Vine) - Gulf Fritillary

Platanus (California Sycamore) - Western Tiger Swallowtail

Populus (Aspen, Poplar) and Salix (Willows) - Western Tiger Swallowtail, Mourning Cloak, Admirals

Sphaeralcea - West Coast Lady, Painted Lady, Checkered Skipper

Rhamnus californica (Coffeeberry) - Echo Spring Azure