

BUTTERFLY Gardening

Fernbank Science Center  DeKalb County Schools
Compost Site and Gardens



Brightly colored butterflies will add welcome color and movement to your backyard habitat. In order to attract butterflies successfully to your yard you will need plants that satisfy the needs of all the stages of a butterfly's life cycle. Butterflies have different requirements for places where they lay their eggs, food for the larval stage (caterpillar), a safe place to form a chrysalis, and a source of nectar for the adult butterfly.

Before you begin to plant your garden, it is helpful to decide what species of butterfly you are interested in attracting, and plan your plant purchases accordingly. Adult butterflies have favorite colors just like we do. They are attracted to yellow, red, orange, pink, or purple blossoms that are flat-topped or clustered, with short flower tubes which allow the butterflies to reach the nectar with their proboscises. These flowers should be grown in open sunny sites as the adults will rarely feed on plants in the shade. Because butterflies are attracted to large clumps of color, it is helpful to plant your flowers in large masses. Butterfly gardens are places where grasses and weeds should be welcome. Butterfly eggs and larvae are sought out by predators such as birds, lizards, spiders, parasitic flies and wasps. These grasses offer a place to hide. Some grasses are even larval host plants for several species of butterfly. Use caution when removing old leaves and dead plant parts; they may be harboring a future butterfly! Some butterflies feed on rotting fruit. If it bothers you to leave rotting fruit on the tree or ground, try making a feeding station with a shallow saucer. You can use rotten fruit, stale beer and sugar, or just place a few banana peels around. Some male butterflies are attracted to shallow pools with muddy edges. When they congregate, it is called a "puddle party." After a cool night, butterflies need to warm their wing muscles by sitting in the sun. Several strategically placed rocks will become the perfect spots to bask.

 **Please remember that a butterfly garden is no place for PESTICIDES OR HERBICIDES.**

GEORGIA BUTTERFLIES

BUTTERFLY	FLIGHT PERIOD	LARVAL HOST PLANT	ADULT NECTAR PLANT
Pipevine Swallowtail <i>Battus philenor</i>	Feb-Nov	Pipevines	Thistles, bergamot, lilac, common azaleas, phlox, teasel, azaleas, lantana, petunias, verbenas
Polydamas Swallowtail <i>Battus polydamas</i>	Apr - Nov	Pipevines (Aristolochia species)	Lantana, honeysuckle, soapweed
Zebra Swallowtail <i>Euryides marcellus</i>	Mar - Dec	young pawpaw	Blueberry, blackberry, lilac, redbud, verbena, dogbane, and common milkweed
Black Swallowtail <i>Papilio polyxenes</i>	Apr - Oct	Queen Anne's Lace, carrot, celery and dill	Red clover, milkweed, and thistles
Giant Swallowtail <i>Papilio cresphontes</i>	All Year	Trees and herbs of the citrus family, prickly ash, and hop tree	Lantana, azalea, Bougainvillea, bouncing Bet, dame's rocket, goldenrod, Japanese honeysuckle, and swamp milkweed
E. Tiger Swallowtail <i>Papilio glaucus</i>	Feb - Nov	Wild cherry, sweetbay, basswood, tulip tree, birch, ash, cottonwood, mountain ash, willow	Wild cherry and lilac
Spicebush Swallowtail <i>Papilio troilus</i>	Apr - Oct	Spicebush, sassafras tree, tulip tree, sweetbay, camphor, redbay	Japanese honeysuckle, jewelweed, thistles, milkweed, azalea, dogbane, lantana, mimosa, and sweet pepperbush
Palamedes Swallowtail <i>Papilio palamedes</i>	Mar - Dec	Laurel family especially redbay	Sweet pepperbush, thistles, blue flag, and azalea
Checkered White <i>Pontia protodice</i>	Mar - Nov	Mustard family, including cabbage, and caper family	Hedge mustards, composites, and alfalfa
W. Virginia White <i>Pieris virginianensis</i>	Apr - May	Toothworts in the mustard family	Toothworts, spring beauty, violets, and other plants
Cabbage White <i>Pieris rapae</i>	Spr - Sum	Plants in the mustard family, and occasionally some in the caper family	Wide array of plants including mustards, dandelion, red clover, asters, and mints

Great Southern White <i>Ascia monuste</i>	All Year	Plants in the mustard family and occasionally some in the caper family	Many species of flowers including saltwort, lantana, and verbena
Falcate Orangetip <i>Anthocharis midea</i>	Mar - June	Plants of the mustard family, including rock cress and winter cress	Mustards, violets, and others
Clouded Sulphur <i>Colias philodice</i>	Mar - Nov	Plants in the pea family, including alfalfa, white clover and pea	Flower nectar of many plants
Orange Sulphur <i>Colias eurytheme</i>	Mar - Nov	Plants in the pea family including alfalfa, white clover and white sweet clover	Dandelion, milkweeds, goldenrods, and asters
Southern Dogface <i>Colias cesonina</i>	All Year	Small-leaved plants in the pea family including alfalfa, prairie clovers, indigo, and clover	Alfalfa, coreopsis, houstonia, and verbena
Cloudless Sulphur <i>Phoebis sennae</i>	All Year	<i>Cassia</i> species in the pea family	Many different flowers with long tubes including cordia, Bougainvillea, cardinal flower, hibiscus, lantana, and wild morning glory
Orange-barred Sulphur <i>Phoebis philea</i>	Summer	<i>Cassia</i> species in the pea family	Flower nectar of many plants
Statira Sulphur <i>Phoebis statira</i>	Feb-Nov	Flowers, mud	Red-flowered plants including scarlet bush
Barred Yellow <i>Eurema daira</i>	All Year	Pencil flower, joint vetches, and other plants in the pea family	Great variety of flowers including joint vetches and shepherd's needle
Little Yellow <i>Eurema lisa</i>	Late Spring - Early Fall	Partridge pea and wild sensitive plant in the pea family	Flowers in the aster family including goldenrods and asters
Sleepy Orange <i>Eurema nicippe</i>	All Year	<i>Cassia</i> species in the pea family	Flower nectar of many plants
Dainty Sulphur <i>Nathalis iole</i>	All Year	Low-growing plants in the aster family especially sheperd's needle, sneezeweed, fetid marigold, and cultivated marigold	Labrador tea, asters, wild marigold, rabbitbrush, and others
Harvester <i>Feniseca tarquinius</i>	Feb - Sept	Woolly aphids, and sometimes scale insects or treehoppers; these insects suck sap from alders, witch hazel, ash, beech, hawthorn, and wild currant	Adult's short proboscis is suited for feeding on aphid honeydew; they do not sip flower nectar
American Copper <i>Lycaena phlaeas</i>	Apr - Sept	herbs of the buckwheat family including sheep sorrel, curled dock	Common buttercup, white clover, butterflyweed, yarrow, ox-eye daisy, and various composites
Great Purple Hairstreak <i>Atides halesus</i>	Mar - Dec	Mistletoe growing on several tree species	Goldenrod, Hercules club, shepherd's needle, sweet pepperbush, and wild plum
Coral Hairstreak <i>Satyrium titus</i>	May - Aug	Wild cherry, wild plum, and chokecherry	Butterflyweed, New Jersey tea, dogbane, and sulphur flower
Edwards Hairstreak <i>Satyrium edwardsii</i>	May - July	Scrub oak and occasionally black oak	Dogbane, goldenrod, meadowsweet, milkweeds, New Jersey tea, staghorn sumac, and white sweet clover
Banded Hairstreak <i>Satyrium calanus</i>	Apr - May	Many species of oak, walnut, and hickory	Dogbane and common milkweed (preferred), chinquapin, small-flowered dogwood, New Jersey tea, meadowsweet, staghorn sumac, white sweet clover, and yarrow
Hickory Hairstreak <i>Satyrium caryaevorum</i>	June - Aug	Mostly hickory; also ash, chestnut, and oak species	Common milkweed, dogbane, New Jersey tea, staghorn sumac, and white sweet clover
King's Hairstreak <i>Satyrium kingi</i>	May - June	Common sweetleaf	Allegheny chinquapin and sourwood are the only reported nectar sources
Striped Hairstreak <i>Satyrium liparops</i>	May	Several woody trees and shrubs in the rose family including American plum; and heath family; also reports for hornbeam, oak, and willow	Chinquapin, common milkweed, dogbane, goldenrod, meadowsweet, New Jersey tea, staghorn sumac, Viburnum, and white sweet clover
Southern Hairstreak <i>Satyrium favonius</i>	Mar - June	Various oaks	Flower Nectar
Brown Elfin <i>Callophrys augustinus</i>	Mar - Apr	Members of the heath family including sugar huckleberry and Labrador tea	Blueberry, footsteps-of-spring, spicebush, willow, winter cress, and wild plum
Frosted Elfin <i>Callophrys irus</i>	Mar - Apr	Members of the pea family: wild indigo and lupine; occasionally blue false indigo and rattlebox	Flower nectar
Henry's Elfin <i>Callophrys henrici</i>	Feb - May	Redbud, huckleberries and blueberries, Mexican buckeye, and <i>Viburnum</i> species	Where redbud is the caterpillar host, its flowers are the main nectar supply for adults; if not willows, wild plum and hawthorn
Eastern Pine Elfin <i>Callophrys niphon</i>	Mar - June	Various hard pines including scrub pine and jack pine, and the soft white pine	Blueberry, cinquefoil, chickweed, common milkweed, and white sweet clover

Juniper Hairstreak <i>Callophrys gryneus</i>	Feb - Sept	Red cedar, California juniper, and Utah juniper	Winter cress, dogbane, common milkweed, wild carrot, shepherd's needle, butterflyweed, whitesweet clover, and others
Hessel's Hairstreak <i>Callophrys hesseli</i>	Apr - July	Atlantic white-cedar	Swamp milkweed, shadbush, sand myrtle, sweet pepperbush, highbush blueberry, buttonbush, and dogbane
White M Hairstreak <i>Parrhasius m-album</i>	Feb - Oct	Live oak and other oak species	Viburnum, sumac, sourwood, wild plum, poinsettia, sweet pepperbush, common milkweed, lantana, dogwood, and goldenrod
Gray Hairstreak <i>Strymon melinus</i>	Feb - Nov	Flowers and fruits from an almost endless variety of plants; most often from pea and mallow families including beans, clovers, cotton), and mallow	Dogbane, milkweed, mint, winter cress, goldenrod, tick trefoil, and white sweet clover
Red-banded Hairstreak <i>Calycopis cecrops</i>	Apr - Oct	Fallen leaves of wax myrtle, dwarf sumac, staghorn sumac, and several oaks	Yarrow, wild cherry, tickseed sunflower, sumac, sweet pepperbush, New Jersey tea, common milkweed, and dogbane
Early Hairstreak <i>Erora laeta</i>	Apr - Sept	Beech and beaked hazel	Fleabane, ox-eyed daisy, and hardtack
Western Pygmy-Blue <i>Brephidium exile</i>	All Year	Pigweed, saltbush species, others in the goosefoot family	Flower nectar
Cassius Blue <i>Leptotes cassius</i>	All Year	Ornamental leadwort, rattlebox, hairy milk pea, lima bean	Shepherd's needle, lippia, and many other flowers
Ceraunus Blue <i>Hemiargus ceraunus</i>	Late Summer	A variety of woody legumes including partridge pea, mesquite, and rosary pea	Flower nectar
Eastern Tailed-Blue <i>Everes comyntas</i>	Feb - Nov	Plants in the pea family including yellow sweet clover, alfalfa; various species of vetch, clover, wild pea, bush clover; and others	This butterfly has a low flight and short proboscis - found at flowers close to the ground, open or short-tubed: white sweet clover, shepherd's needle, wild strawberry, winter cress, cinquefoils, asters, and others
Spring Azure <i>Celastrina ladon</i>	Jan - Oct	Flowers of a variety of woody shrubs and occasionally herbs including dogwood, New Jersey tea, and meadowsweet	Dogbane, privet, New Jersey tea, blackberry, common milkweed, and many others
Slivery Blue <i>Glaucoopsyche lygdamus</i>	Mar - Aug	Species in the pea family	Nectar from flowers including Asteraceae
Little Metalmark <i>Calephelis virginiensis</i>	Mar - Oct	Yellow thistle	Short-flowered composites including yarrow, lance-leaved coreopsis, fine-leaved sneezeweed, and blue mist flower
Gulf Fritillary <i>Agraulis vanillae</i>	All Year	Various species of passion-vine including maypops and running pop	Lantana, shepherd's needle, cordias, composites, and others
Zebra <i>Heliconius charitonius</i>	Summer	Passion-vines	Flower nectar and pollen, which are gathered on a set foraging route or "trap-line" Favorite plants include lantana and shepherd's needle
Variiegated Fritillary <i>Euptoieta claudia</i>	Feb - Dec	A variety of plants in several families including maypops, may apple violets, purslane, stonecrop, and moonseed	Butterflyweed, common milkweed, dogbane, peppermint, red clover, swamp milkweed, and tickseed sunflower
Diana <i>Speyeria diana</i>	June - Sept	Violets	Dung and flower nectar from plants including common and swamp milkweeds, ironweed, red clover, and butterflybush
Great Spangled Fritillary <i>Speyeria cybele</i>	June - Sept	Various violet species	Milkweeds, thistles, ironweed, dogbane, mountain laurel, Verbena, vetch, bergamot, red clover, joe-pye weed, and purple coneflower
Aphrodite Fritillary <i>Speyeria aphrodite</i>	June - Sept	Various violet species including northern downy violet and lance-leaved violet	Milkweed and viper's bugloss, among others
Gorgone Checkerspot <i>Chlosyne gorgone</i>	Apr - Sept	Asteraceae including sunflower and crosswort species	Nectar, especially from yellow flowers
Silvery Checkerspot <i>Chlosyne nycteis</i>	May - Sept	Many different composites including black-eyed susan, sunflowers and wingstem	Nectar from flowers of red clover, common milkweed, and dogbane
Harris' Checkerspot <i>Chlosyne harrisii</i>	June - July	Flat-topped white aster	Flower nectar
Texan Crescent <i>Phyciodes texana</i>	Mar - Nov	Various low plants of the Acanthus family	Flower nectar
Phaon Crescent <i>Phyciodes phaon</i>	Feb - Oct	Fogfruit and mat grass in the verbena family	Nectar from flowers of lippia and composites including shepherd's needle
Pearl Crescent <i>Phyciodes tharos</i>	All Year	Several species of smooth-leaved true asters	Nectar from a great variety of flowers including dogbane, swamp milkweed, shepherd's needle, asters, and wintercress
Tawny Crescent <i>Phyciodes batesii</i>	May- July	Wavy-leaved aster and perhaps other true asters	Flower nectar

Baltimore <i>Euphydryas phaeton</i>	May - June	Plants where eggs are laid and eaten before hibernation are turtlehead, hairy beardtongue, English plantain, and false foxglove; overwintering caterpillars may use these plants, but may also wander and feed on arrowwood, common lousewort, Japanese honeysuckle, and white ash	Milkweed, viburnum, and wild rose
Question Mark <i>Polygona interrogationis</i>	Feb - Sept	American elm, red elm, hackberry, Japanese hop, nettles, and false nettle	Rotting fruit, tree sap, dung, carrion (when these are unavailable, Question Marks visit flowers such as common milkweed, Aster, and sweet pepperbush)
Eastern Comma <i>Polygona comma</i>	Feb - Oct	All members of the elm and nettle families including American elm, hops, nettle, false nettle, and wood nettle	Rotting fruit and tree sap
Green Comma <i>Polygona faunus</i>	May - Aug	Small pussy willow, black birch, alder, western azalea, and gooseberry	Flower nectar, dung, carrion
Mourning Cloak <i>Nymphalis antiopa</i>	June - July	Willows including black willow, weeping willow, and silky willow; also American elm, cottonwood, aspen, paper birch, and hackberry	Prefer tree sap, especially that of oaks They walk down the trunk to the sap and feed head downward They will also feed on rotting fruit, and only occasionally on flower nectar
American Lady <i>Vanessa virginiensis</i>	All Year	Plants in the sunflower family: sweet everlasting, pearly everlasting, plantain-leaved pussy toes, wormwood, ironweed, and burdock	Dogbane, aster, goldenrod, marigold, selfheal, common milkweed, and vetch
Painted Lady <i>Vanessa cardui</i>	May - Oct	More than 100 host plants have been noted; favorites include thistles, hollyhock and mallow, and various legumes	Composites 3-6 feet high, especially thistles; also aster, Cosmos, blazing star, ironweed, and joe-pye weed Also red clover, buttonbush, privet, milkweeds
Red Admiral <i>Vanessa atalanta</i>	Oct - Mar	Plants of the nettle family including stinging nettle, tall wild nettle, wood nettle, false nettle, pellitory, mamaki, and possibly hops	Sap flows on trees, fermenting fruit, and bird droppings; visiting flowers only when these are not available. Then they will nectar at common milkweed, red clover, aster, and alfalfa, among others
Common Buckeye <i>Junonia coenia</i>	All Year	Plants from the snapdragon family including snapdragon and toadflax; the plantain family and the acanthus family	Composites including Aster, chickory, gumweed, knapweed, and tickseed sunflower Dogbane, peppermint, and other flowers are also visited
White Peacock <i>Anartia jatrophae</i>	All Year	Water hyssop	Shepherd's needle
Viceroy <i>Limenitis archippus</i>	May - Sept	Trees in the willow family including willows, poplars and cottonwoods	Early in the season, they feed on aphid honeydew, carrion, dung, and decaying fungi. Later generations feed more often at flowers, favoring composites including aster, goldenrod, joe-pye weed, shepherd's needle, and Canada thistle.
Goatweed Leafwing <i>Anaea andria</i>	Winter form Aug-May summer form from July-Aug	Goatweed, Texas croton, and prairie tea; all in the spurge family	Sap, rotting fruit, dung, bird droppings
Hackberry Emperor <i>Asterocampa celtis</i>	May - Oct	Various hackberries and sugarberry	
Tawny Emperor <i>Asterocampa clyton</i>	Mar - Nov	Trees of the elm family	Sap, rotting fruit, dung, carrion Will take moisture a wet spots along roads and streams
Southern Pearly Eye <i>Enodia portlandia</i>	Mar - Sept	Bamboo, giant cane and switch cane	Tree sap, rotting fruit, dung, carrion Tawny Emperors almost never visit flowers
Northern Pearly Eye <i>Enodia anthedon</i>	May - Sept	Various grasses including white grass, bearded shorthusk, plume grass, broadleaf uniola, and bottlebrush	Sap, rotting fruit, carrion, dung
Creole Pearly Eye <i>Enodia creola</i>	April - Sept	Switch cane in the grass family	Dung, fungi, carrion, and sap from willows, poplars, and birch
Appalachian Brown <i>Satyroides appalachia</i>	June - Oct	Sedge and giant sedge	Rotting fruit, sap, dung, carrion; never flower nectar
Gemmed Satyr <i>Cyllopsis gemma</i>	Apr - Sept	Probably Bermuda grass	Sap and other non-floral resources
Carolina Satyr <i>Hermeuptychia sosybius</i>	All year	Carpet grass, centipede grass; probably St Augustine grass, Kentucky bluegrass and others	Not reported
Georgia Satyr <i>Neonympha areolata</i>	April - Sept	Probably sedges	Sap and rotting fruit
Little Wood Satyr <i>Megisto cymela</i>	Mar - Sept	Orchard grass and centipede grass	Not reported
Viola's Wood Satyr <i>Megisto viola</i>	Summer	Orchard grass and centipede grass	Sap, aphid honeydew, and rarely flower nectar
Common Wood Nymph <i>Cercyonis pegala</i>	May - Oct	Purpletop and other grasses	Sap, aphid honeydew, and rarely flower nectar