

BRING BUTTERFLIES TO YOUR GARDEN

As gardeners, we want to encourage butterflies to our gardens. Gardens can be specifically designed to attract butterflies. Creating a successful butterfly garden is not difficult; you just need to provide adult butterflies with nectar from bright, colorful flowers and certain host plants to lay their eggs on. After the caterpillars hatch, they will consume the leaves and stems of the host plant. Adult caterpillars will then need other nectar food sources. Listed below are select butterfly species, their host plants and nectar food sources.

HOST PLANTS FOR SELECT BUTTERFLY SPECIES

Black swallowtail – Fennel, parsley, dill, Queen Anne's lace

Buckeye – Snapdragon, plantain, verbena

Cloudless sulfur – Senna, cassia, clover

Gulf fritillary – Passion vine

Monarch – Milkweed species (orange butterfly weed, common milkweed, etc.)

Painted lady – Thistle, hollyhock, plantain

Silver-spotted skipper – Locust, American wisteria

Spicebush swallowtail – Spicebush, sassafras

Tiger swallowtail (S.C. state butterfly) – Wild cherry, tulip poplar, willow, red maple

Zebra swallowtail – Pawpaw

TOP-PERFORMING BUTTERFLY NECTAR PLANTS (*NATIVE)

Butterfly milkweed* – Perennial

Tall verbena – Perennial

Coneflower* – Perennial

Ironweed* – Perennial

Aster* – Perennial

Milkweed, parsley, dill and fennel are absolutely necessary so plant more than you need.

Butterflies also need water and salt. Place a shallow dish with sand and fill with salt water that has ½ to ¾ cup of table salt in the water.

Also place several flat stones in a sunny location so butterflies can warm their bodies.

Do not use insecticides in your butterfly garden.

By having host plants, nectar sources, water and sunning sites, your garden will be a butterfly haven.

Source: hgic@clermson.edu and scwf.org

