



NORTH AMERICAN BUTTERFLY ASSOCIATION

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SOUTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA

by Jane Ruffin

TOP BUTTERFLY NECTAR FLOWERS

A number in front of a flower name indicates a particularly recommended plant (1 = most recommended). Numbers in "BLOOM SEASON" correspond to the month (4 = April, 5 = May, etc.). Abbreviations: A = alien species, N = native species.

	FLOWER	HEIGHT	COLOR	BLOOM SEASON	ATTRACTED BUTTERFLIES	COMMENTS
N	New Jersey tea <i>Ceanothus americanus</i>	3-5'	white	5-7	early butterflies	slow to establish; cut back in spring topkilled from hard winter
N	Blazingstars (gayfeathers) <i>Liatris</i>	3-5'	pink	6-8	many	
N	Monarda (beebealm) <i>Monarda</i>	3-4'	pink, red	6-8	many	does well in partial shade
N 3	Mountain mints <i>Pycnanthemum</i>	3'	white	6-8	many	prefers full soil; tolerant of soil type
N 2	Milkweeds <i>Asclepias</i>	3-6'	pink, orange	6-9	many	
N	Goldenrods <i>Solidago</i>	to 5'	yellow	6-10	many, especially Monarchs in migration	some species can become invasive
A	Purple coneflower <i>Echinacea purpurea</i>	2-4'	pink	6-10	many, including Eastern Tiger Swallowtail Hairstreaks Skippers	easy to grow; self- seeds
N 5	Verbena <i>Verbena</i>	3-4'	lavendar	6-10	many	
A 7	Zinnias <i>Zinnia</i>	2-4'	many	6-10	many	annual
N	Anise hyssop <i>Agastrache foeniculum</i>	2-4'	white	7-8	many	
N	Sweet pepperbush <i>Clethra alnifolia</i>	10'	white	7-8	many, especially Swallowtails Silver-spotted Skipper	prune in spring to desired height

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TOP BUTTERFLY NECTAR FLOWERS

(continued)

	FLOWER	HEIGHT	BLOOM COLOR	SEASON	ATTRACTED BUTTERFLIES	COMMENTS
N 4	Joe-pye-weed <i>Eupatorium</i>	5-8'	red, purple	7-9	many	does well in partial shade
A 1	Butterfly bush <i>Buddleia davidii</i>	10'	many	7-10	many, including Swallowtails Monarch Skippers	cut back in spring; does not like wet soil
A	Mexican sunflower <i>Tithonia rotundifolia</i>	6'	orange	7-10	Swallowtails	an annual
N	Ironweed <i>Vernonia</i>	4-7'	red, purple	8-9	many	
N 6	Asters <i>Aster</i>	3-5'	many	8-10	many	

NECTAR FLOWERS THAT DON'T WORK IN THIS REGION

Abbreviations: A = alien species, N = native species.

FLOWER	COMMENTS
A Cosmos <i>Cosmos</i>	more attractive to butterflies further south
A Lantana <i>Lantana</i>	more attractive to butterflies further south
N Porterweed <i>Stachytarpheta jamaicensis</i>	very successful in Florida but does poorly here as an annual

TOP CATERPILLAR FOOD PLANTS

A number in front of a plant name indicates a particularly recommended plant (1 = most recommended). Abbreviations: A = alien species, N = native species.

	NAME	HEIGHT	BUTTERFLY CATERPILLARS	COMMENTS
N	Butterfly milkweed <i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>	2-3'	Monarch	
A	Carrot <i>Daucus carota</i>	2'	Black Swallowtail	wonderful large flowers in 2nd year
N 2	Common milkweed <i>Asclepias syriaca</i>	2-4'	Monarch	

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TOP CATERPILLAR FOOD PLANTS

(continued)

	NAME	HEIGHT	BUTTERFLY CATERPILLARS
N	False indigo <i>Baptisia australis</i>	4'	Wild Indigo Duskywing
A 1	Fennel <i>Foeniculum vulgare</i>	4'	Black Swallowtail
N	Indigo bush <i>Amorpha fruticosa</i>	15'	Silver-spotted Skipper
A	Parsley <i>Petroselinum crispum</i>	1'	Black Swallowtail
A 3	Stinging nettle <i>Urtica dioica</i>	5'	Red Admiral
N 2	Swamp milkweed <i>Asclepias incarnata</i>	3-4'	Monarch

COMMON BUTTERFLIES FOR YOUR GARDEN & YARD

A number in front of a butterfly name indicates a particularly likely species (1 = most expected to be seen). Numbers in "FLIGHT PERIOD" and "CATERPILLAR SEASON" correspond to the month (4 = April, 5 = May, etc.), with < meaning earlier in the month, m in the middle of the month, and > late in the month.

NAME	FLIGHT PERIOD	CATERPILLAR SEASON	CATERPILLAR FOOD PLANTS
Black Swallowtail <i>Papilio polyxenes</i>	4-10	4-10	carrot family
Eastern Tiger Swallowtail <i>Papilio glaucus</i>	4-10	4-10	Tulip tree
Cabbage White <i>Pieris rapae</i>	3-11	3-11	cabbage family
Clouded Sulphur <i>Colias philodice</i>	3-11	3-11	clovers
Orange Sulphur <i>Colias eurytheme</i>	3-11	3-11	legume family
Eastern Tailed Blue <i>Everes comyntas</i>	4-10	4-10	legume family
Spring Azure <i>Celastrina ladon</i>	3-9	3-9	shrub flowers
Question Mark <i>Polygonia interrogationis</i>	4-10		elms, nettles
Eastern Comma <i>Polygonia comma</i>	4-10		nettles

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COMMON BUTTERFLIES FOR YOUR GARDEN & YARD

(continued)

NAME	FLIGHT PERIOD	CATERPILLAR SEASON	CATERPILLAR FOOD PLANTS
Mourning Cloak <i>Nymphalis antiopa</i>	2-11	4-6	willows
American Lady <i>Vanessa virginiensis</i>	5-9		pearly everlasting
Red Admiral <i>Vanessa atalanta</i>	5-9		nettles
Monarch <i>Danaus plexippus</i>	5-9	5-9	milkweeds
Silver-spotted Skipper <i>Epargyreus clarus</i>	5-10		black locust, leadplants
Peck's Skipper <i>Polites peckius</i>	6-9		grasses

LOCAL & UNUSUAL BUTTERFLIES FOR YOUR GARDEN & YARD

Numbers in "FLIGHT PERIOD" and "CATERPILLAR SEASON" correspond to the month (4 = April, 5 = May, etc.), with < meaning earlier in the month, m the middle of the month, and > late in the month.

NAME	FLIGHT PERIOD	CATERPILLAR SEASON	CATERPILLAR FOOD PLANTS
Banded Hairstreak <i>Satyrium calanus</i>	6-7	4-5	oaks
Red-banded Hairstreak <i>Calycopis cecrops</i>	6-8	4-5	oaks, sumacs
Viceroy <i>Limenitis archippus</i>	5-9	4-10	willows

GENERAL COMMENTS ABOUT GARDENING IN THIS REGION

USDA ZONE: 6 & 7

Clay and stone occur in the soil in much of this area. Wood chip gardening is very successful here. The four seasons are distinct. Some winters go below 0°F and some summers reach 106°F or more.

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