



# NORTH AMERICAN BUTTERFLY ASSOCIATION

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## LOS ANGELES BASIN COASTAL STRIP

by Margaret Huffman

### TOP BUTTERFLY NECTAR FLOWERS

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

FLOWER	HEIGHT	BLOOM COLOR	ATTRACTED SEASON	BUTTERFLIES	COMMENTS
A Citrus	15'	white	all year	Gray Hairstreak	Easy to grow perennial.
4 N Deerweed <i>Lotus scoparius</i>	1'	yellow	all year	Acmon & Marine Blue, Funereal Duskywing, Fiery & Umber Skipper	Very pretty perennial all year; needs good drainage; roots sensitive to disturbance; hard to find right balance in soil moisture; challenging to grow.
A Scabiosa <i>Scabiosa</i>	6"	lavender	all year	Cabbage White, Marine Blue, American & West Coast Ladies, Fiery & Umber Skippers	Drought tolerant; needs feeding & dead-heading to maintain bloom; perennial.
N California buckwheat <i>Eriogonum fasciculatum</i>	2½'	white	spring-summer	Gray Hairstreak, Acmon & Marine Blues, Funereal Duskywing, Fiery & Umber Skippers	Needs perfect drainage; dislikes damp springs & summer water; attractive perennial all year.
N Golden yarrow <i>Eriophyllum confertiflorum</i>	1½'	gold	spring-summer	Cabbage White, Marine Blue, American & West Coast Ladies, Fiery & Umber Skippers	Drought tolerant; very showy perennial; cut back after flowering; easy to grow.
1 A Brazilian milkweed <i>Asclepias curassavica</i>	3'	red & orange	spring-fall	Cabbage White, Gray Hairstreak, Gulf Fritillary, Monarch	Easy to grow perennial; drought tolerant. Cut back after seedset. Attractive most of time.
A Cosmos <i>Cosmos</i>	3'	purple	summer	Western Tiger Swallowtail; Gray Hairstreak	Easy to grow annual; Hard to find tall ones in LA.
N Toyon <i>Heteromeles arbutifolia</i>	25'	white	summer	Western Tiger Swallowtail; Mourning Cloak	Easy to grow perennial; needs some shade here; short bloom period.

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**LOS ANGELES BASIN COASTAL STRIP**

**TOP BUTTERFLY NECTAR FLOWERS**

(continued)

<b>FLOWER</b>	<b>HEIGHT</b>	<b>COLOR</b>	<b>BLOOM SEASON</b>	<b>ATTRACTED BUTTERFLIES</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
N Ashy-leaf buckwheat <i>Eriogonum cinereum</i>	1½'	pink	summer-fall	Gray Hairstreak, Acmon & Marine Blues, Fune-real Duskywing, Fiery & Umber Skippers	Likes good drainage; easy to grow perennial; gray foliage attractive.
N Common yarrow <i>Achillea millefolium</i>	6"	white	summer-fall	Cabbage White, Marine Blue, American & West Coast Ladies, Fiery & Umber Skippers	Drought tolerant; easy to grow; invasive perennial.
3 N Dune buckwheat <i>Eriogonum parvifolium</i>	2½'	pale pink	summer-fall	Gray Hairstreak, Acmon & Marine Blues, Fune-real Duskywing, Fiery & Umber Skippers	Needs perfect drainage; tolerates summer water; attractive perennial all year; grows well here.
N Narrow-leaf milkweed <i>Asclepias fasciculatum</i>	2½'	pale pink	summer-fall	Gray Hairstreak, Mourning Cloak, Queen, Monarch	Slow to establish perennial; needs good drainage; takes patience!
2 N Woolly aster <i>Lessingia filaginifolia</i>	6"	lavender	summer-fall	Cabbage White, Marine Blue, American & West Coast Ladies, Fiery & Umber Skippers	Likes good drainage; drought tolerant; tends to sprawl; pretty perennial if kept in check.
5 A Mexican sunflower <i>Tithonia rotundifolia</i>	4'	orange	fall	Western Tiger Swallowtail, Gulf Fritillary, Mourning Cloak	Easy to grow annual; drought tolerant. Has to be replanted yearly.

**NECTAR FLOWERS THAT DON'T WORK IN THIS REGION**

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

<b>FLOWER</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
N Black sage <i>Salvia mellifera</i>	Blooms in early spring when fog and overcast are common (conditions when there isn't butterfly activity).
N California rose <i>Rosa californica</i>	Needs too much shade in our area (conditions where there isn't butterfly activity).
N Cleveland sage <i>Salvia clevelandii</i>	
N Holly-leaf cherry <i>Prunus ilicifolia</i>	Blooms too early in season (when there isn't butterfly activity).
N Purple sage <i>Salvia leucophylla</i>	Blooms a little later but still too foggy.

## LOS ANGELES BASIN COASTAL STRIP

### 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
1	A Brazilian milkweed <i>Asclepias curassavica</i>	3'	Monarch	See listing in "Top Butterfly Nectar Flowers"
4	N Dune buckwheat <i>Eriogonum parvifolium</i>	2½'	Acmon Blue	See listing in "Top Butterfly Nectar Flowers"
3	A Narrow-leaf milkweed <i>Asclepias fascicularis</i>	2½'	Queen, Monarch	See listing in "Top Butterfly Nectar Flowers"
2	A Two-tone everlasting <i>Gnaphalium bicolor</i>	10"	American Lady	Very hard to get started but easy to grow after that; dies after two years.

### 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	COMMENTS
12	Anise Swallowtail <i>Papilio zelicaon</i>	1-12	1-12	fennel (alien), southern tauschia (native)	Anise isn't the food plant here
7	Western Tiger Swallowtail <i>Papilio rutulus</i>	2-10	2-10	sycamore, willow, alder	
1	Cabbage White <i>Pieris rapae</i>	1-12	1-12	mustards	
4	Gray Hairstreak <i>Strymon melinus</i>	2-11	2-11	buckwheat, mallow	
8	Marine Blue <i>Leptotes marina</i>			deerweed, cape plumbago	most common blue
10	American Lady <i>Vanessa virginiensis</i>	1-12	1-12	everlasting ( <i>Gnaphalium bicolor</i> )	
9	West Coast Lady <i>Vanessa annabella</i>	1-12	1-12	native mallow, cheeseweed	more common than Painted Lady
	Red Admiral <i>Vanessa atalanta</i>	3-11	3-11	baby tears	not yet found in garden
11	Mourning Cloak <i>Nymphalis antiopa</i>	1-12	1-12	willow	in riparian areas
5	Monarch <i>Danaus plexippus</i>	1-12	1-12	milkweeds	
	Mournful Duskywing <i>Erynnis tristis</i>	2-9	2-9	oak	need nearby oak woods, not found near my garden
6	Funereal Duskywing <i>Erynnis funeralis</i>	2-10	2-10	deerweed	
2	Fiery Skipper <i>Hylephila phyleus</i>	1-12	1-12	Bermuda grass	

## LOS ANGELES BASIN COASTAL STRIP

3 UMBER SKIPPER *Poanes melane* 4-9 4-9 Tufted hairgrass, others

## 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	COMMENTS
Pale Swallowtail <i>Papilio eurymedon</i>	2-10	2-10	Native buckthorn, Ceanothus	Visits gardens smack dab against the mountain.
Cloudless Sulphur <i>Phoebis sennae</i>	3-10	3-10	Senna	Migrant
Acmon Blue <i>Plebejus acmon</i>	2-11	2-11	Deerweed, buckwheat	Needs natural area nearby
Painted Lady <i>Vanessa cardui</i>	2-11	2-11	Thistles & others	Mostly a migrant
Queen <i>Danaus gilippus</i>	3-11	3-11	Native milkweed	Migrant
Common Checkered-Skipper <i>Pyrgus communis</i>	2-10	2-10	Cheeseweed	Needs lots of cheesweed nearby
Northern White-Skipper <i>Heliopetes ericetorum</i>	4-10	4-10	Bush mallow	

## GENERAL COMMENTS ABOUT GARDENING IN THIS REGION

### USDA ZONE: 10

California, even if limited to Southern California, is so diverse that what works for me may not work for someone 5 miles from me.

This information is based on the past few years of observation and gardening in a place 1/2 mile from the Pacific Ocean, where fogs and the marine layer keep my garden damp and sunless for much of March through June. After that, my garden is sunny and sometimes 80-90°, rarely higher, through October.

All listed nectar flowers require full sun.

Acmon Blue is not supposed to be a garden butterfly, but wild areas are within 1/2 mile of my garden.

*A Painted Lady nectaring on thistle, which is also one of its caterpillar food plants, by John H. Gerdes.*

