



# NORTH AMERICAN BUTTERFLY ASSOCIATION

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## NORTHWEST FLORIDA PANHANDLE

by Scott & Kim Diemer

reviewed by Emily Peterson, The Garden Gate

### TOP BUTTERFLY NECTAR FLOWERS

Numbers in "BLOOM SEASON" correspond to the month (4 = April, 5 = May, etc.); letters to season (S = spring, X = summer, F = fall), with < meaning earlier in the month, m the middle of the month, and > late in the month. Abbreviations: A = alien species, N = native species.

FLOWER	HEIGHT	COLOR	BLOOM SEASON	ATTRACTED BUTTERFLIES	COMMENTS
N Climbing Aster <i>Aster carolinianus</i>	vine	pink	1-12	many	
A Moss Verbena <i>Verbena tenuisecta</i>	8-12"	various	<S->F	many	winters over in many areas
N Phlox, Trailing <i>Phlox nivalis</i>	2-3'	various	S	many	
N Red-bud <i>Cercis canadensis</i>	25'	pink	S	many	
N American Beautyberry <i>Callicarpa americana</i>	4-7'	whitish pink	S-X	many	colorful fall fruit attractive to birds
N Goldenrod <i>Solidago</i>	3-6'	yellow	S-X	many	grow native species (many kinds)
A Phlox <i>Phlox drummondii</i>	2-3'	various	S-X	many	
N Phlox, Downy <i>Phlox pilosa</i>	2-3'	various	S-X	many	
A Society Garlic <i>Tulbaghia violacea</i>	1-3'	pink/ purple	S-X	many	
N Tropical Sage <i>Salvia coccinea</i>	2-3'	red	S-X	many	
N Blazing Star <i>Liatris</i>	2-5'	pink, purple	S-F	many	many native species
A Butterfly Bush <i>Buddleia davidii</i>	15'	various	S-F	many	
N Butterfly Weed <i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>	1-3'	orange	S-F	many	
N Conradina or Dune/ Wild Rosemary <i>Conradina canescens</i>	1-2'	lavender	S-F	many	dry, well drained conditions

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## TOP BUTTERFLY NECTAR FLOWERS

(continued)

FLOWER	HEIGHT	COLOR	BLOOM SEASON	ATTRACTED BUTTERFLIES	COMMENTS
N Coreopsis <i>Coreopsis lanceolata</i>	1-2'	yellow	S-F	many	easy grower
A Glossy Abelia <i>Abelia x grandiflora</i>	6-15'	pink	S-F	many	
N Horsemint (Dotted Mint) <i>Monarda punctata</i>	2-3'	yellow/ cream	S-F	many	short-lived, reseeds
N Indian Blanket <i>Gaillardia pulchella</i>	1-3'	orange	S-F	many	not as attractive to butterflies if near other plants attractive to butterflies
A Lemon beebalm <i>Monarda citriodora</i>	2-3'	varied	S-F	many	short-lived, reseeds
A Mexican Cigar Plant <i>Cuphea ignea</i>	1-4'	orange red	S-F	many	attracts larger butterflies
A Mexican Sage <i>Salvia leucantha</i>	1-4'	purple	S-F	many	exotic
A Plumbago <i>Plumbago auriculata</i>	3-4'	various	S-F	many	
A Verbena <i>Verbena braziliensis</i>	3-6'	purple	S-F	many	leggy
A Wild Bergamot <i>Monarda fistulosa</i>	2-3'	lavender	S-F	many	long-lived and long blooming
A Zinnia or Bachelor Button/Corn Flower <i>Zinnia</i>	1-4'	various	S-F	many annual, reseeds	warm-weather
A Mexican Sunflower <i>Tithonia rotundifolia</i>	4-6'	orange	S-F	many	warm weather annual, reseeds
N Aster/Daisy <i>Boltonia asteroides</i>	4-6'	white	S-frost	many	drought tolerant
N Firebush <i>Hamelia patens</i>	5-7'	orange	S-frost	many	height controlled by frost
A Golden Dewdrop <i>Duranta repens</i>	4-10'	blue/ white	S-frost	many	protect in northern areas
A Heliotrope <i>Heliotropium arborescens</i>	1-2'	purple	S-frost	many	
A Lantana <i>Lantana</i>	2'	various	S-frost	many	many invasive, use sterile hybrids
N Lantana <i>Lantana depressa</i>	2'	yellow	S-frost	many	endangered in the wild

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TOP BUTTERFLY NECTAR FLOWERS

(continued)

FLOWER	HEIGHT	COLOR	BLOOM SEASON	ATTRACTED BUTTERFLIES	COMMENTS
A Mexican Milkweed <i>Asclepias curassavica</i>	2-4'	yellow to red	S-frost	many	
A Ox-eye Daisy <i>Leucanthemum vulgare</i>	1-3'	white	S-frost	many	drought tolerant invasive
A Pentas <i>Pentas lanceolata</i>	2-4'	various	S-frost	many	red flowers more disease resistant
N Porterweed <i>Stachytarpheta jamaicensis</i>	2-4'	various	S-frost	many	peninsular species that reseeds
A Spanish Needle <i>Bidens pilosa</i>	3-4'	white	S-frost	many	invasive
N Button Bush <i>Cephalanthus occidentalis</i>	10'	white	X	many	
A Chaste Tree <i>Vitex agnus-castus</i>	15'	lavender	X	many	
N Joe-pye-weed <i>Eupatorium fistulosum</i>	4-7'	purple/ pink	X	many	
A Phlox <i>Phlox paniculata</i>	3-4'	various	X	many	
N Stoke's Aster <i>Stokesia laevis</i>	1-2'	deep blue to lavender	X	many	
N Swamp Milkweed <i>Asclepias incarnata</i>	2-4'	pink	X-F	many	
A Cypress-vine <i>Ipomoea quamoclit</i>	vine	red	X-frost	many	
A Fire Spike <i>Odontonema strictum</i>	2-4'	red	X-frost	many	
N Ironweed <i>Vernonia</i>	3-6'	purple	>X	many	
N Cardinal Flower <i>Lobelia cardinalis</i>	2-4'	red	>X-F	many	aquatic or moist environment
N Mist Flower <i>Conoclinium coelestinum</i>	1-2'	blue	>X-F	many	invasive
N Golden Aster <i>Chrysopsis</i>	1-3'	yellow	F	many	
N Swamp Sunflower <i>Helianthus augustifolia</i>	3-8'	yellow	F	many	leggy, invasive
A Pineapple Sage <i>Salvia elegans</i>	1-3'	red	F-frost	many	exotic

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

FLOWER	COMMENTS
Bee-balm <i>Monarda didyma</i>	Difficult to grow; unreliable bloomer.
Black-eyed Susan <i>Rudbeckia</i>	Rarely visited, but some report success with <i>R. fulgida</i> , <i>R. maxima</i> , and <i>R. nitida</i> .
Daisies and fleabanes (most)	Spring and summer nights are too hot for these northern-acclimated flowers (e.g., <i>Aster</i> , <i>Chrysanthemum</i> ).
Goldenrod <i>Solidago</i>	Do not grow non-native northern varieties.
Purple Coneflower <i>Echinacea purpurea</i>	Does not grow well, but some report success by adding lime or mushroom compost to the soil.

### TOP CATERPILLAR FOOD PLANTS

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

NAME	HEIGHT	BUTTERFLY CATERPILLARS	COMMENTS
A Alfalfa <i>Medicago sativa</i>	2'	Clouded Sulphur, Orange Sulphur	not easily available
N Black Cherry <i>Prunus serotina</i>	100'	Eastern Tiger Swallowtail Red-spotted Purple	plant trees for the future
A Cabbage <i>Brassica oleracea</i>	1'	Cabbage White	
A Carrot <i>Daucus carota v. sativa</i>	1'	Black Swallowtail	easy for school life-cycle demonstration
A Cassia <i>Senna bicapsularis, alata, corymbosa</i>	2-10'	Cloudless Sulphur	
A Carolina Wild Petunia <i>Ruellia caroliniensis</i>	1'	Common Buckeye	reseeds
A Cultivated Citrus <i>Citrus</i>	4-10'	Giant Swallowtail	enough mild winters in area to grow for foliage for caterpillar food, but not for fruit
A Fennel <i>Foeniculum vulgare</i>	3-5'	Black Swallowtail	easy for school life-cycle demonstration
N Firecracker Plant <i>Russelia equisetiformis</i>	4-6'	Common Buckeye	protect to overwinter
N Frogfruit <i>Lippia nodiflora</i>	<6"	Phaon Crescent	
N Hackberry <i>Celtis occidentalis</i>	60'	American Snout, Question Mark, Hackberry Emperor, Tawny Emperor	plant trees for the future
N Hercules Club <i>Zanthoxylum clava-hercules</i>	15'	Giant Swallowtail	

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### TOP CATERPILLAR FOOD PLANTS

(continued)

NAME	HEIGHT	BUTTERFLY CATERPILLARS	COMMENTS
A Mexican Milkweed <i>Asclepias curassavica</i>	2-5'	Monarch	freeze tolerant--useful for late-season caterpillars
A Mustard <i>Brassica juncea</i>	2'	Cabbage White	
N Maypop Passionvine <i>Passiflora incarnata</i>	vine	Zebra Heliconian, Gulf Fritillary Variegated Fritillary	Zebra Heliconian found more to the east
N Pawpaw <i>Asimina</i>	2-10'	Zebra Swallowtail	many species of pawpaw
N Peppergrass <i>Lepidium virginicum</i>	2-3'	Cabbage White, Checkered White	
N Red Bay <i>Persea borbonia</i>	25'	Palamedes Swallowtail	
N Sassafras <i>Sassafras albidum</i>	90'	Spicebush Swallowtail	
A Queen Anne's Lace <i>Daucus carota</i>	2-3'	Black Swallowtail	
N Willow <i>Salix</i>	10-12'	Red-spotted Purple, Viceroy	wet or boggy soils best
N Woolly Pipevine <i>Aristolochia tomentosa</i>	vine	Pipevine Swallowtail	

### COMMON BUTTERFLIES FOR YOUR GARDEN & YARD

Numbers in "FLIGHT PERIOD" and "CATERPILLAR SEASON" correspond to the month (4 = April, 5 = May, etc.); letters to season (S = spring, X = summer, F = fall).

NAME	FLIGHT PERIOD	CATERPILLAR SEASON	CATERPILLAR FOOD PLANTS	COMMENTS
Pipevine Swallowtail <i>Battus philenor</i>	S-F	S-F	Pipevine ( <i>Aristolochia tomentosa</i> )	
Zebra Swallowtail <i>Eurytides marcellus</i>	S-F	S, F	Pawpaw	
Black Swallowtail <i>Papilio polyxenes</i>	S-F	S-F	Carrot, dill, fennel, parsley ( <i>Petroselinum crispum</i> ), and related	
Eastern Tiger Swallowtail <i>Papilio glaucus</i>	S-F	S-F	Wild cherry ( <i>Prunus</i> ), sweet bay ( <i>Magnolia virginiana</i> )	
Palamedes Swallowtail <i>Papilio palamedes</i>	S-F	S-F	Red bay	
Cloudless Sulphur <i>Phoebis sennae</i>	S-F	S-F	Cassia	
Great Purple Hairstreak <i>Atlides halesus</i>	S-F	S-F	Mistletoe ( <i>Phoradendron</i> )	

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**COMMON BUTTERFLIES FOR YOUR GARDEN & YARD**

(continued)

NAME	FLIGHT PERIOD	CATERPILLAR SEASON	CATERPILLAR FOOD PLANTS	COMMENTS
Red-banded Hairstreak <i>Calycopis cecrops</i>	S-F	S-F	Southern bayberry ( <i>Myrica cerifera</i> ), sumac ( <i>Rhus</i> )	
Cassius Blue <i>Leptotes cassius</i>	S-F	S-F	Leadworts ( <i>Plumbago auriculata</i> , <i>Auriculata alba</i> , <i>Auriculata</i> "Cape Royal")	
Ceraunus Blue <i>Hemiargus ceraunus</i>	S-F	S-F	Cow pea ( <i>Vigna lutea</i> ), butterfly pea ( <i>Centrosema virginianum</i> ), and milk pea ( <i>Galactia regularis</i> )	
Zebra Heliconian <i>Heliconius charitonius</i>	S-frost	1-12	Passionvine ( <i>Passiflora</i> )	
Gulf Fritillary <i>Agraulis vanillae</i>	S-frost	1-12	Passionvine ( <i>Passiflora</i> )	
Phaon Crescent <i>Phyciodes phaon</i>	S-F	S-F	Frogfruit	
Red Admiral <i>Vanessa atalanta</i>	S-F	S-F	False nettle ( <i>Boehmeria cylindrica</i> )	
American Lady <i>Vanessa virginiensis</i>	S-F	S-F	Curry plant ( <i>Helichrysum angustifolia</i> ) and cudweed	
Painted Lady <i>Vanessa cardui</i>	S-F	S-F	Hollyhock ( <i>Alcea rosea</i> and <i>Malva zebrina</i> )	
Common Buckeye <i>Junonia coenia</i>	S-F	S-F	Twin flower ( <i>Dyschoriste oblongifolia</i> ), seymeria ( <i>Seymeria</i> ), toadflax ( <i>Linaria</i> ), plantain ( <i>Plantago</i> ), and firecracker plant	
Red-spotted Purple <i>Limenitis arthemis</i>	S-F	S-F	Black cherry	
Viceroy <i>Limenitis archippus</i>	S-F	S-F	Willow	
Monarch <i>Danaus plexippus</i>	S, F	S, F	Milkweed ( <i>Asclepias</i> )	
Long-tailed Skipper <i>Urbanus proteus</i>	S-F	S-F	Tick trefoil ( <i>Desmodium</i> )	

## NORTHWEST FLORIDA PANHANDLE

# LOCAL & UNUSUAL BUTTERFLIES FOR YOUR GARDEN & YARD

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NAME	FLIGHT PERIOD	CATERPILLAR FOOD PLANTS	COMMENTS
Mourning Cloak <i>Nymphalis antiopa</i>	<S, >F	willows	mostly winter, a rare breeder
White Peacock <i>Anartia jatrophae</i>	X-F	Smooth water-hyssop ( <i>Bacopa monnieri</i> ), green shrimp plant ( <i>Blechum brownei</i> ), verbenas	rare storm-blown visitor

## GENERAL COMMENTS ABOUT GARDENING IN THIS REGION

### USDA ZONE: 8A/B

This brochure applies to Bay, Calhoun, Escambia, Franklin, Gadsen, Gulf, Holmes, Jackson, Jefferson, Leon, Liberty, Okaloosa, Santa Rosa, Wakulla, and Washington Counties.

Your proximity to the Gulf of Mexico will determine hardiness zone. Much more relevant is heat tolerance rather than cold hardiness of plants. Contact your county extension office for specifics. The region covered by this guide experiences "winter" and endures consecutive days of hard freezes, occasional snowfall or sleet and very rarely minor snow accumulations.

Because this region has diverse growing conditions; soils ranging from pure sand to heavy clay; weather conditions from high heat to the occasional hard freeze; droughts, floods, and sometimes salt-water inundation from hurricanes; butterfly gardening can be a real challenge, but worth the effort because of the rewards it brings. Locate butterfly gardens in a sunny location, protected from wind, with trees and shrubs nearby for shelter.

No matter what type of soil you have, your butterfly garden should be heavily amended with organic materials. We recommend fresh mushroom compost. Because mushroom compost is so complete (it is made up of chicken manure, organic materials, blood meal, bone meal, and trace minerals), you will not need any other soil amendments and should not have to fertilize for a year. To apply correctly, remove unwanted vegetation from your butterfly garden, spread 3-4" of fresh mushroom compost over the area and spade it into the root zone. Top dressing (applying 1/2 to 1" of mushroom compost on top of the soil) once a year and working it into the soil to a depth of 2-3" (by lightly spading or forking the soil surface, or raking if the surface is loose and friable) should keep your garden looking good.

If you are not using fresh mushroom compost, you can use peat moss, manure, your own compost, and even leaves as a soil amendment or a time release fertilizer.

A shallow pond or saucer filled with damp soil or sand will allow butterflies to "puddle" and take up minerals that they need. And remember, pesticides and butterfly gardens don't mix. A well-chewed plant is a sign of success!

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### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

*Butterflies Through Binoculars-Florida* by Glassberg, Minno, and Calhoun (2000, Oxford University Press).  
University of Florida Extension Service Guide WEC-22

Some excellent internet sources useful in Florida are available at:

<a href="http://www.plantatlas.usf.edu">http://www.plantatlas.usf.edu</a>	Atlas of Florida Vascular Plants
<a href="http://plantdatabase.com">http://plantdatabase.com</a>	A searchable database
<a href="http://www.floridagardener.com">http://www.floridagardener.com</a>	Florida Gardener site
<a href="http://www.fnps.org">http://www.fnps.org</a>	Florida Native Plant Society
<a href="http://www.hear.org/gcw">http://www.hear.org/gcw</a>	Compendium of weeds; searchable
<a href="http://www.2bnthewild.com">http://www.2bnthewild.com</a>	Wildflowers of Southeastern US
<a href="http://www.thebutterflybox.com/gardens.html">http://www.thebutterflybox.com/gardens.html</a>	The Butterfly Box; links and guides
<a href="http://www.nhm.ac.uk/entomology/hostplants">http://www.nhm.ac.uk/entomology/hostplants</a>	UK Natural History Museum; searchable caterpillar food
plant database	
<a href="http://www.whatsthiscaterpillar.co.uk/america">http://www.whatsthiscaterpillar.co.uk/america</a>	North American Caterpillars; searchable global database
<a href="http://www.enature.com">http://www.enature.com</a>	Zip-code specific guides and information
<a href="http://wellness.ucdavis.edu/safety_info/poison_prevention_/take_care_with_plants/toxicity_of_plants/html">http://wellness.ucdavis.edu/safety_info/poison_prevention_/take_care_with_plants/toxicity_of_plants/html</a>	the University of California site with detailed plant listing

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