



NORTH AMERICAN BUTTERFLY ASSOCIATION

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CENTRAL OHIO

by Jim Davidson

TOP BUTTERFLY NECTAR FLOWERS

A number in front of a flower name indicates the priority of recommendation (1 = most recommended). For "BLOOM SEASON," S = spring, X = summer, F = fall, with < meaning earlier in the season, m the middle of the season, and > late in the season. Abbreviations: A = alien species, N = native species.

FLOWER	HEIGHT	COLOR	BLOOM SEASON	ATTRACTED BUTTERFLIES	COMMENTS
N 12 Black-eyed Susan <i>Rudbeckia hirta</i>	2'	yellow	<X	Northern Metalmark Great Spangled Fritillary Pearl Crescent	easy to grow, but to get metalmark, must be near its food plant, round-leaved ragwort (<i>Senecio obovatus</i>)
N 2 Butterfly milkweed <i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>	30"	orange	<X	Swallowtails Hairstreaks Great Spangled Fritillary Pearl Crescent	doesn't like competition; tolerates dryness; comes up late in spring (leave space for it)
N 12 Buttonbush <i>Cephalanthus occidentalis</i>	6-10'	white	<X	Skippers, including Mulberry Wing & Black Dash	to attract wetland skippers, plant near a wetland
N 10 Swamp milkweed <i>Asclepias incarnata</i>	4'	pink	<X	Swallowtails Fritillaries Skippers	needs water but does ok in garden
N 6 Wild bergamot <i>Monarda fistulosa</i>	2-3'	lavendar	<X	Fritillaries Hummingbird Sphinx Moth	easy
N 7 Joe-pye-weeds <i>Eupatorium</i>	4-8'	mauve	X	Swallowtails	lives in wet meadows
A 5 Mexican sunflower <i>Tithonia rotundifolia</i>	8'	orange	X	Swallowtails Monarchs	annual; attracts hummingbirds
N 11 Mistflower <i>Eupatorium coelestinum</i>	2'	blue	X	Peck's Skipper	sprouts late (leave room for it)
A 1 Butterfly bush <i>Buddleia davidii</i>	4-8'	various	X-F	many	cover base with leaves in late Nov.
N 8 Dense blazingstar <i>Liatris spicata</i>	4-5'	purple	X-F	Skippers	for wet places

TOP BUTTERFLY NECTAR FLOWERS

(continued)

	FLOWER	HEIGHT	BLOOM COLOR	SEASON	ATTRACTED BUTTERFLIES	COMMENTS
N 3	Purple coneflower <i>Echinacea purpurea</i>	3'	purple	mX	Fritillaries Monarch	doesn't like competition; tolerates dryness
N 4	New England aster <i>Aster novae-angliae</i>	3-4'	purple	>X	Pearl Crescent Monarch	easy; can crowd out other plants
N 9	Rough blazingstar <i>Liatris aspera</i>	4-5'	purple	>X-F	Skippers, especially Leonard's Skipper	for dry, sandy, well-drained places

NECTAR FLOWERS THAT DON'T WORK IN THIS REGION

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

FLOWER	COMMENTS
A Dwarf butterfly bush <i>Buddleia davidii</i>	Some dwarf cultivars have no scent and no nectar; they look good but butterflies ignore them. (Note: Some dwarf varieties work very well.)
A Lantana <i>Lantana</i>	This seems to be a magnet for butterflies in the South but doesn't seem to work in this region.

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 1	Butterfly milkweed <i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>	30"	Monarch	See nectar flowers.
A 2	Fennel <i>Foeniculum vulgare</i>	4'	Black Swallowtail	
N	Swamp lousewort <i>Pedicularis lanceolata</i>	3'	Baltimore Checkerspot	needs wet places
N	Swamp milkweed <i>Asclepias incarnata</i>	4'	Monarch	See nectar flowers.
N	Turtlehead <i>Chelone glabra</i>	4'	Baltimore Checkerspot	needs wet places

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TOP CATERPILLAR FOOD PLANTS

(continued)

NAME	HEIGHT	BUTTERFLY CATERPILLARS	COMMENTS
N Wood betony <i>Pedicularis canadensis</i>	10"	Baltimore Checkerspot	grows in wet & dry places; doesn't like competition

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 the middle of the month, and > late in the month.

NAME	FLIGHT PERIOD	CATERPILLAR SEASON	CATERPILLAR FOOD PLANTS
1 Eastern Tiger Swallowtail <i>Papilio glaucus</i>	4-9	4-9	ashes, sassafras, tulip tree, wild black cherry
3 Spicebush Swallowtail <i>Papilio troilus</i>	4-9	4-9	sassafras, spicebush
1 Cabbage White <i>Pieris rapae</i>	4-10	4-10	cabbage (mustard) family
1 Clouded Sulphur <i>Colias philodice</i>	m4-11	5-11	clovers
1 Orange Sulphur <i>Colias eurytheme</i>	>4-11	5-11	alfalfa and other legumes
Spring Azure <i>Celastrina ladon</i>	4-<9	4-9	dogwoods, wingstem
2 Great Spangled Fritillary <i>Speyeria cybele</i>	6-9	4-5	violets
Pearl Crescent <i>Phyciodes tharos</i>	4-m10	4-10	asters
Question Mark <i>Polygonia interrogationis</i>	5-10	5-9	elms, hops, nettles
Eastern Comma <i>Polygonia comma</i>	4-10	5-9	elms, hops, nettles
Milbert's Tortoiseshell <i>Nymphalis milberti</i>	5-10	5-9	nettles
Red Admiral <i>Vanessa atalanta</i>	5-9	5-9	nettles
Red-spotted Purple <i>Limenitis arthemis (astyanax)</i>	m5-m9	6-9	wild black cherry, also aspens, poplars, oaks
Viceroy <i>Limenitis archippus</i>	6-9	6-9	willows

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COMMON BUTTERFLIES FOR YOUR GARDEN & YARD

(continued)

NAME	FLIGHT PERIOD	CATERPILLAR SEASON	CATERPILLAR FOOD PLANTS
Northern Pearly-Eye <i>Enodia anthedon</i>	5-8	4-7	grasses
1 Monarch <i>Danaus plexippus</i>	5-10	5-10	milkweeds

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
Giant Swallowtail <i>Papilio cresphontes</i>	5-9	5-9	prickly ash	
Baltimore Checkerspot <i>Euphydryas phaeton</i>	6	5,7	swamp lousewort, turtlehead	eggs laid in clusters in June; larvae feed in webs in July
Broad-winged Skipper <i>Poanes viator</i>	7	5-6	sedges	a wetland skipper
Dion Skipper <i>Euphyes dion</i>	7	5-6	sedges	a wetland skipper
Duke's Skipper <i>Euphyes dukesi</i>	7	5-6	sedges	a wetland skipper

GENERAL COMMENTS ABOUT GARDENING IN THIS REGION

USDA ZONE: 5/6

Many areas in this region have soils with much clay. More lime (alkaline) soils occur west of Columbus (in glaciated areas). The topography is rather flat, dissected by streams. All four seasons occur here, each about three months long. The climate has precipitation (rain and snow) distributed throughout the year to favor dominance of trees if left undisturbed. It is warm enough for butterfly bush to overwinter here if mulched (protected) over winter. The flowers of the alien purple loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*) are very attractive to swallowtails but should be kept away from wetlands where it is very invasive. Because it can aggressively spread and crowd out native plants, horticultural use of this plant may be banned in your area.

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