



# NORTH AMERICAN BUTTERFLY ASSOCIATION

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## SOUTH CENTRAL VIRGINIA BETWEEN RICHMOND & CHARLOTTESVILLE (POWHATAN CO.)

by Richard Johnson

### 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
8 N Bedding phlox <i>Phlox subulata</i>	2-3"	white/ purple	3-4	Swallowtails	
6 A Lilac <i>Syringa vulgaris</i>	4-8'	purple	3-4	Larger species	Only flowers for a few years here
N Pennsylvania bittercress <i>Cardamine pratensis</i>	6-12"	white	3-4	Falcate Orangetip	
A Red clover <i>Trifolium pratense</i>	8-12"	pink	3-10	Whites, Sulphurs, Blues, especially Spring Azure	
A White clover <i>Trifolium repens</i>	8-12"	white	3-10	Whites, Sulphurs, Blues, especially Spring Azure	
9 A Shasta daisy <i>Chrysanthemum maximum</i>	3-4'	white/ yellow	4-5	Many smaller species: Hairstreaks, Blues, Skippers	
5 N Tickseed coreopsis <i>Coreopsis lanceolata</i>	3'	yellow	5-6	Many, especially Fritillaries	
3 N Purple coneflower <i>Echinacea purpurea</i>	2-3'	purple	6-8	Many	May be sown from seed, drought tolerant, does not need soil amended.
2 N Hoary mountain mint <i>Pycnanthemum incanum</i>	3'	white/green	7-8	Many	May be planted or sown from seed. Needs part shade.
4 N Joe-pye-weed <i>Eupatorium fistulosum</i>	3-6'	pink	7-8	Many, especially Swallowtails	Transplants well; likes moisture and some shade.
7 N Butterfly milkweed <i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>	2-3'	orange	7-9	All types; reliable but overwhelming densities	
1 A Butterfly bush <i>Buddleia davidii</i>	8'	white (yellow, purple, pink ones do poorly)	7-10 (esp. if dead-headed)	Many	Dig deep bed, amend soil, prune back to 3' in Jan. Watch for Japanese beetles!

## SOUTH CENTRAL VIRGINIA

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

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

FLOWER	COMMENTS
A Cornflower <i>Centaurea cyanus</i>	Reliable annual but no butterfly activity seen.
N Boneset <i>Eupatorium perfoliatum</i>	No nectaring on a single large plant in garden.
N Black-eyed Susan <i>Rudbeckia hirta</i>	Many plants but no nectaring; much loved by deer, though.
N Coreopsis <i>Coreopsis tinctoria</i>	No nectaring seen.
A Queen Anne's lace <i>Daucus carota</i>	Caterpillar food plant (see below) but blooms don't attract much.
A Yarrow <i>Achillea millefolium</i>	No nectaring seen.
N Wild bergamot <i>Monarda fistulosa</i>	Better for bees than butterflies.
Succulent lupine <i>Lupinus succulentus</i>	No nectaring seen.
N Ironweed <i>Veronica noveboracensis</i>	Many plants but no nectaring seen.
N Mistflower <i>Eupatorium coelestinum</i>	Many plants but no nectaring seen.
N New England Aster <i>Aster novae-angliae</i>	Visited by a few autumnal skippers but mostly ignored by butterflies; does not seem to like Virginia clay soils.

### TOP CATERPILLAR FOOD PLANTS

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

NAME	HEIGHT	BUTTERFLY CATERPILLARS	COMMENTS
N Butterfly milkweed <i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>	2-3'	Monarch	
N Eastern red cedar <i>Juniperus virginiana</i>	4-8'	'Olive' Juniper Hairstreak	Butterfly seems to prefer young trees, of height listed.
N Pennsylvania bittercress <i>Cardamine pratensis</i>	6-12"	Falcate Orangetip	
N Purple Coneflower <i>Echinacea purpurea</i>	3-4'	Silvery Checkerspot Pearl Crescent	
A Queen Anne's lace <i>Daucus carota</i>	2-4'	Black Swallowtail	This plant is naturalized in this area.
N Violets <i>Viola</i>	2-4"	Great Spangled Fritillary	

### 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.).

NAME		FLIGHT PERIOD	CATERPILLAR FOOD PLANTS	COMMENTS
Pipevine Swallowtail	<i>Battus philenor</i>	3-4		Uncommon

SOUTH CENTRAL VIRGINIA

COMMON BUTTERFLIES FOR YOUR GARDEN & YARD

(continued)

NAME		FLIGHT PERIOD	CATERPILLAR FOOD PLANTS	COMMENTS
Black Swallowtail	<i>Papilio polyxenes</i>	7-8	Queen Anne's lace	Uncommon
1 Eastern Tiger Swallowtail	<i>Papilio glaucus</i>	3-9	Yellow poplar and others	Abundant; females often black form.
Spicebush Swallowtail	<i>Papilio troilus</i>	3-8		Occasional
Cabbage White	<i>Pieris rapae</i>	4-10		Occasional
Clouded Sulphur	<i>Colias philodice</i>	3-10		Occasional
Little Yellow	<i>Eurema lisa</i>	9-10		Rare fall migrant from South
Red-banded Hairstreak	<i>Calycopis cecrops</i>	5,7		Abundant/common
Gray Hairstreak	<i>Strymon melinus</i>	5-8		Occasional
Eastern Tailed-Blue	<i>Everes comyntas</i>	4-10		Abundant
Spring Azure	<i>Celastrina ladon</i>	3-9	Dogwood	Common
American Snout	<i>Libytheana carinenta</i>	5-6		Occasional
3 Great Spangled Fritillary	<i>Speyeria cybele</i>	6-9	Violets	Abundant
Silvery Checkerspot	<i>Chlosyne nycteis</i>	3-8	Purple coneflower	Abundant
2 Pearl Crescent	<i>Phyciodes tharos</i>	3-10	Purple coneflower	Abundant
Question Mark	<i>Polygonia interrogationis</i>	7-8		Only summer brood seen
Eastern Comma	<i>Polygonia comma</i>	7-8		Only summer brood seen
Mourning Cloak	<i>Nymphalis antiopa</i>	3-10		Common/occasional
American Lady	<i>Vanessa virginiensis</i>	4-8		Occasional
Painted Lady	<i>Vanessa cardui</i>	4-8		Occasional
Red Admiral	<i>Vanessa atalanta</i>	8-9		Occasional, but only in fall
Red-spotted Purple	<i>Limenitis arthemis astyanax</i>	8-10		Common in fall
Viceroy	<i>Limenitis archippus</i>	7-8		Occasional
Southern Pearly-Eye	<i>Enodia portlandia</i>	7-8		Occasional; near woods
Eyed Brown	<i>Satyroides eurydice</i>	7-8		Unusual; near woods
Carolina Satyr	<i>Hermeuptychia sosybius</i>	4-8		Common
Little Wood-Satyr	<i>Megisto cymela</i>	5-6		Occasional
Common Wood-Nymph	<i>Cercyonis pegala</i>	6-7		Occasional
Monarch	<i>Danaus plexippus</i>	6-10	Butterfly milkweed	Common
Silver-spotted Skipper	<i>Epargyreus clarus</i>	4-10		Abundant
Hoary Edge	<i>Achalarus lyciades</i>	6-7		Occasional

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### COMMON BUTTERFLIES FOR YOUR GARDEN & YARD

(continued)

NAME		FLIGHT PERIOD	CATERPILLAR FOOD PLANTS	COMMENTS
Common Checkered-Skipper	<i>Pyrgus communis</i>	8		Occasional
Clouded Skipper	<i>Lerema accius</i>	7-8		Occasional
Least Skipper	<i>Ancyloxypha numitor</i>	6-7		Occasional
Sachem	<i>Atalopedes campestris</i>	4-8		Common
Zabulon Skipper	<i>Poanes zabulon</i>	4,8		Common

### LOCAL & UNUSUAL BUTTERFLIES FOR YOUR GARDEN & YARD

Numbers in "FLIGHT PERIOD" and "CATERPILLAR SEASON" correspond to the month (4 = April, 5 = May, etc.).

NAME		FLIGHT PERIOD	CATERPILLAR FOOD PLANTS	COMMENTS
Zebra Swallowtail	<i>Eurytides marcellus</i>	3-4	Pawpaw	Unusual
Falcate Orangetip	<i>Anthocharis midea</i>	3-4	Pennsylvania bittercress	Relatively common
Harvester	<i>Feniseca tarquinius</i>	4-5		Occasional
Henry's Elfin	<i>Callophrys henrici</i>	3	Redbud	Reliable small population
'Olive' Juniper Hairstreak	<i>Callophrys gryneus gryneus</i>	3,6	Young eastern red cedar	Occasional/unusual
Hickory Hairstreak	<i>Satyrium caryaevorum</i>	6-7		Occasional
Dusky Azure	<i>Celastrina nigra</i>	3-6	Dogwood	Occasional/unusual
Gemmed Satyr	<i>Cyllopsis gemma</i>	4,7-8		Relatively common

### GENERAL COMMENTS ABOUT GARDENING IN THIS REGION

#### USDA ZONE: 7

Soil is heavy clay and quite acid, and generally requires breaking up to 2' depth and amending with lime, compost, and manure. Bone meal and/or wood ash are recommended. I fertilized for perennials with a heavily phosphorus mix. Sloping beds help drainage. Peat moss is ideal compost, but increases soil acidity. Spring seeding and planting of perennials, from March on, seem preferable to fall. Butterflies are in flight in every month except December and January. Normal summer temperatures are in the 90's with high humidity. Several 100+° days are usual. Rainfall is variable and sporadic, averaging 3-4" per summer month. Winter temperatures are normally in the 20's or 30's, with lows above 0°F. However, once every several years an extremely cold winter may be expected, with lows well below 0°, which will kill many perennials not hardy to Zone 5.

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