

# Making Space for Butterflies

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*Creating a garden that is friendly to butterflies is easy, but it is more than just planting pretty flowers.*

Butterfly gardening at its most effective is based on a three fold strategy:

1. Follow practices that protect and promote butterflies at all life stages
2. Provide for their various needs, and, lastly,
3. Provide a wide variety of nectar sources for them (this is where the pretty plants come in)

## Butterfly Friendly Garden Practices

\*\*\*Do not use chemicals in the garden. No insecticides, pesticides, herbicides, fungicides. Insecticides work on butterflies, too, and other chemicals may cause them harm, as well.

- Allow “weeds” such as dandelion, clover, and plantain to exist in your lawn. Many of these plants are great nectar and host plants for butterflies.
- Set your mower a little higher, and mow less often. Eggs and larvae living in the lawn will thank you.
- Allow natural areas to grow un-mown, allowing wildflowers to flourish. (Birds will thank you, too)
- Allow larvae to feed on host plants. At times, adherence to this policy will require a great deal of tolerance to the damage they inflict.
- Don't be too hasty when it comes to cleaning up brush, removing tall stems from dormant perennials, and removing downed limbs and tree trunks. Butterflies often over-winter in places such as these.

## Providing for All the Needs of Butterflies

*Butterflies need more than nectar to flourish.*

- Shelter- Provide shelter from wind and rain by planting tall perennials, shrubs and trees.
- Sunlight- Butterflies love to flit around in large, open areas. A natural prairie is ideal, but your chemical free and clover rich lawn is a good compromise.
- Rocky areas -Butterflies like to bask in the sun to dry their wings and warm themselves.
- Puddles - Puddle areas contain concentrated minerals that butterflies crave.
- Winter homes - Butterflies in various stages over-winter in crevices in fallen wood. You can also put up a butterfly house, but remember, if it is used, it will be used in winter, not summer.

# Host and Nectar Plants for Butterflies

Many butterflies have an exclusive relationship with one plant or one plant family. These butterflies absolutely require a chemical that is present in that particular host. Other butterflies will feed on nearly anything. In either case, it is a good idea to generously use native plants, as they are sure to attract and nourish our native butterflies.

Dandelion	**Phlox (Several species)
Plantain	**Ironweed (Vernonia-several)
Sassafras	**Milkweeds
Spicebush	Asclepias tuberosa
Passionflower	(Butterfly Weed)
Violet (Several species)	Asclepias incarnata
Jewel weed	(Swamp Milkweed)
Wild Ginger	**Coneflower (Echinacea-several species)
Solidago	**Asters, especially New England Aster,
Nettle	White Wood Aster, and Aromatic Aster
Dogbane	Sedum (Native and Non-native varieties)
Anise Hyssop	Golden Ragwort
Bluestar (Amsonia)	Wild Geranium
Native Azaleas	Pycnanthemum (Mtn. Mint)
Pipevine	New Jersey Tea
**Buttonbush	**Coreopsis (several species)
Poplar	**Bee Balm and other Monarda
Pawpaw	**Blazing star (Liatris- several species)
Fire Pink	**Eupatorium
Wild Pink	Boneset
Native Thistle	Joe Pye Weed
	Wild Ageratum
	Snake Root

Plants to Attract Beneficial Insects or Repel Pests - Some are also very attractive to Butterflies

Oregano	Mints
Cosmos	Lavender
Basil	Marigolds
Sage	Dill
Fennel	Rosemary
Rue	Borage
Coriander/Cilantro	
Parsley	Yarrow
Caraway	Nasturtiums
Tansy	Lovage
Marjoram	
Golden Marguerites	

## Shy Valley Native Habitat Nursery & Herbarry

“Where nature and the garden meet”

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Christy and Philip Shivell Fall Branch, TN 423/348-6570 [www.shyvalley.com](http://www.shyvalley.com)