

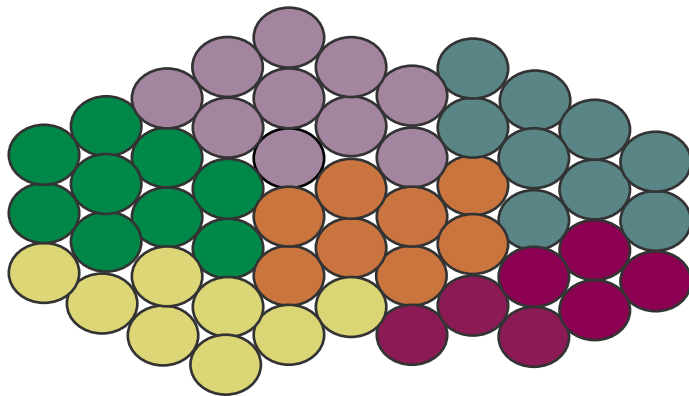


Build Your Own *Butterfly Garden*

Butterfly Gardens preserve natural communities by providing homes for some of the most beautiful, winged members of our ecosystem.

Butterfly gardening is one way you can promote the health of our natural world. Butterfly gardens preserve natural communities by providing food and shelter for some of our most beautiful and beloved creatures in the ecosystem.

By selecting wildflowers for your garden, you provide the best food source available. Remember that our butterflies and native wildflower have co-adapted for many thousands of years and are ideally suited to one another. Be wary of cultivars (including cultivars derived from native species) and non-native species. Cultivars are often sterile, and therefore, may lack nectar; and, worse when they do provide nectar the nectar may be of very poor quality – essentially junk food. Poor quality nectar can lead to poor health and even starvation of our precious butterflies and other pollinators.



How do I make a Butterfly Garden?

It's easy! Just follow these steps:

1. Form the basic shape of your Butterfly Garden by outlining it with a garden hose or some rope. The size of your garden is up to you!
2. Remove the grass or sod with a shovel and place it in your compost bin, or reuse it in bare areas of your yard. You can also lay a sheet of black plastic to eliminate the sod, but this method usually takes one full year.
3. Plants should be spaced one foot apart. Insert plant tags next to each group of species for quick identification when weeding.
4. Mulch the area (2" to 3" thick) to help keep weeds down and hold in moisture, making sure to keep mulch away from the base of each plant.
5. Water every other day (unless it rains) until the plants show new growth and are well-established, which usually take about two weeks.

Once your native Butterfly Garden plants are established, they'll thrive without additional watering. Fertilizers are not necessary, and only minimal weeding will be needed - short, weekly stints of about 15 minutes will make weeding easy.

 **Early Bloomer 1**
Ex. Spiderwort
(*Tradescantia ohiensis*)

 **Mid Bloomer 1**
Ex. Marsh blazing star
(*Liatris spicata*)

 **Late Bloomer 1**
Ex. Showy goldenrod
(*Solidago speciosa*)

 **Early Bloomer 2**
Ex. Beardtongue
(*Penstemon digitalis*)

 **Mid Bloomer 2**
Ex. Broad-leaved purple
coneflower
(*Echinacea purpurea*)

 **Late Bloomer 2**
Ex. Sky-blue aster
(*Symphotrichum oolentangiense*)

What is a Butterfly Garden?

Butterfly Gardens preserve natural communities by providing homes for some of the most beautiful, winged member of our ecosystem.

The native prairie wildflowers specially chosen for your garden will provide hours of enjoyment for you while they support all life stages of butterflies (from egg, to caterpillar, to pupa to adult) and furnish food and shelter for birds. Some of these perennial plants will bloom all season into the fall. They grew here naturally before the pioneers came to this land - so, in addition to being beautiful, they're hardy and low maintenance.

Which butterflies will my garden attract?

Butterfly visitors to your yard could include yellow swallowtails, black swallowtails, red admirals, cabbage whites, mourning cloaks (in wooded areas), monarchs which are fond of blazing star and New England aster.

Butterfly Gardens are also attractive to another winged creature - the dragonfly. These four-winged flyers are not only pretty, but they are also voracious mosquito eaters sure to become welcome guests in your yard!

Choose a sunny site out of the wind. Butterflies prefer feeding in areas where they don't have to fight air currents; and, while there are woodland dwelling butterflies, most species will prefer lots of sunlight especially in late season. Well drained soils are preferred, but native plants are so adaptable that almost any soil type will do. If your soil is heavy clay, you may wish to add organic matter like peat or composted manure, available at any home and garden center.

Which plants do I choose?

Our garden design is focused on providing nectar sources throughout the growing season. Choose at least 1 species for each part of the growing season: early, mid, and late. Consider height; smaller gardens tend to look better when planted with lower growing species.

Butterflies can nectar on almost any flower shape, but on cool days tend to prefer flowers with flat open faces similar to Black-eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia*) for basking.

A word on neonics (neonicotinoid insecticides) and other pesticides.

Insecticides and especially neonics have no place in a yard designed to host and attract butterflies or other pollinators. If you subscribe to a lawn care service, talk to them about the products they use. Even when used at low levels, pesticides can weaken and even kill butterflies and other pollinators in all stages of their life cycle.

Design Options

Consider expanding your feeding garden to include the following:

Host Plants

Support butterflies in all their life stages by providing these host plants.

- Sedges (*Carex* species)
- Milkweeds (*Asclepias* species)
- Members of the Dill family (*Zizia* species or *Eryngium yuccifolium*)
- Legumes (*Lupine*, *Desmanthus*, *Amorpha*,
- *Dalea*, *Chamaecrista*, *Lespedeza*)
- Asters (*Symphyotrichum* species)
- Plus, thistles, violets and more!

Support Tall Flowers

Intersperse a sedge or short grass species such as Bicknell's sedge, Prairie Dropseed or Little bluestem throughout your garden to provide butterfly shelter and structural support for taller flowers.

