



NORTH AMERICAN BUTTERFLY ASSOCIATION

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PALM BEACH COUNTY (SOUTHEASTERN FLORIDA)

by Kathy Malone

with assistance from Lana and Alana Edwards

TOP BUTTERFLY NECTAR FLOWERS

A number in front of a flower name indicates a particularly recommended plant (1 = most recommended). Abbreviations: A = alien species, N = native species.

	FLOWER	HEIGHT	BLOOM COLOR	ATTRACTED SEASON	BUTTERFLIES	COMMENTS
A	Ageratum <i>Ageratum</i>	6-12"	blue	year-round	Monarch, Queen	ground cover
N	Butterfly sage <i>Cordia globosa</i>	5'	white	year-round	Atala, Hairstreaks, Ruddy Daggerwing, Skippers	branch may die for no apparent reason
N 2	Blue porterweed <i>Stachytarpheta jamaicensis</i>	1-4'	purple	year-round	very many	prune 1-2/yr reseeds readily
N 7	Fiddlewood	tree	white	year-round	Atala	will grow into tree unless pruned
N 1	Firebush <i>Hamelia patens</i>	1-15'	orange	year-round	Sulphurs Zebra (attracts hummingbirds)	drought tolerant prune hard 1/yr berries for wildlife
A 6	Lantana <i>Lantana camara</i>	6"-1'	various	year-round	many	prune
N 5	Lantana <i>Lantana involucrata</i>	4'	white	year-round	Atala and others	nice bush
A	Mexican flame vine	vine	orange	year-round	Sulphurs, Zebra, Julia (attracts hummingbirds)	can take over
A 3	Pentas <i>Pentas lanceolata</i>	1-4'	various	year-round	Polydamas & Giant Swallowtails, Sulphurs Gulf Fritillary, Monarch	frequent pruning; gets woody in 1-2 years
A 9	Pink porterweed	6'	pink	year-round	Sulphurs, Gulf Fritillary, and others	prune often (it gets top heavy and stem splits easily) blooms very pretty
N	Spanish needles <i>Bidens pilosa</i>		white	year-round	many	"weedy"
N 4	Tropical sage <i>Salvia coccinea</i>	1-2'	red,pink	year-round	very many	replace annually reseeds readily
N 8	Verbena <i>Verbena</i>	1'	purple	year-round	Sulphurs, Gulf Fritillary, and others	semi-shade (to last longer)

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TOP BUTTERFLY NECTAR FLOWERS

(continued)

	FLOWER	HEIGHT	COLOR	BLOOM SEASON	ATTRACTED BUTTERFLIES	COMMENTS
N	Pennyroyal <i>Piloblephis rigida</i>	6"	purple	winter	many	minty smell; great ground cover
A	Butterfly bush <i>Buddleia davidii</i>	bush	various	spring-fall	many	requires regular pruning
N	Black-eyed Susan <i>Rudbeckia hirta</i>		yellow	spring-fall	Skippers	
N	Wild coffee <i>Psychotria nervosa</i>	bush	white	summer-fall	Zebra	likes shade; prune

NECTAR FLOWERS THAT DON'T WORK IN THIS REGION

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

FLOWER	COMMENTS
N Blanket flower <i>Gaillardia</i>	A nice native plant that is drought tolerant, but I haven't seen much nectaring on it.
N Dune sunflower	Great native ground cover, but I only saw one hairstreak on this in several years
N Ironweed <i>Vernonia</i>	Beautiful purple blooms, but I have not seen them nectared at.
N Necklace pod	A nice native plant, and Cassius Blue hangs around it for nectar, but most butterflies do not do much nectaring at it.
N Tickseed <i>Coreopsis</i>	I have never seen anything nectar on this (our state wildflower), but a Zebra was observed on <i>Coreopsis lanceolata</i> .

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	COLOR/SEASON	CATERPILLARS	COMMENTS
A 6	Blue plumbago <i>Plumbago</i>	1-3'	blue or white	Cassius Blue	also uses a native white plumbago
N 2	Bahama cassia <i>Cassia bahamensis</i>	1-10'	yellow/fall	Sulphurs, especially Orange-barred Sulphur	<i>C. bicapsularis</i> , an alien, also works

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TOP CATERPILLAR FOOD PLANTS

(continued)

	NAME	HEIGHT	COLOR/SEASON	CATERPILLARS	COMMENTS
N 8	Coontie <i>Zamia pumila</i>	1'		Atala	slow growing; if nibbled, it will flush, backout next spring
A	Fennel, parsley, dill			Black Swallowtail	
N 2	Partridge pea (senna) <i>Cassia chamaecrista</i>	1-8'	yellow/fall	Sulphurs, especially Cloudless Sulphur	
N 3	Passionvine <i>Passiflora suberosa</i>	vine	white/spring-fall	Gulf Fritillary, Zebra, Julia	some alien passion vines attract more than others: just test them out.
A 4	Pipe vine <i>Aristolochia</i>	vine		Polydamas Swallowtail	plant plenty (they'll eat them down)
N 9	Red bay <i>Persea borbonia</i>	to 15'	insignificant	Palamedes Swallowtail	prune if you don't want it as a tree
A 1	Scarlet milkweed <i>Asclepias curassavica</i>	3'	orange/continuous	Monarch, Queen	prune after bloom (there is also a native swamp milk.)
N 7	Water hyssop <i>Baccopa monieri</i>	ground cover	small purple/ year-round	White Peacock	plant in wet area, or add peat to soil
N	White vine <i>Sarcostemma clausum</i>	vine		Soldier	needs to be in wet area to attract
N 5	Wild lime <i>Zanthoxylum fagara</i>	1-10'	insignificant	Giant Swallowtail	thorny; prune or it will become a tree

COMMON BUTTERFLIES FOR YOUR GARDEN & YARD

NAME	FLIGHT PERIOD	CATERPILLAR SEASON	CATERPILLAR FOOD PLANTS	COMMENTS
Polydamas Swallowtail <i>Battus polydamas</i>	year-round	year-round	pipe vine	
Giant Swallowtail <i>Papilio cresphontes</i>	year-round	year-round	wild lime, citrus	
Black Swallowtail <i>Papilio polyxenes</i>	spring-summer		fennel, parsley, dill	
Cloudless Sulphur <i>Phoebis sennae</i>	year-round	year-round	senna	
Orange-barred Sulphur <i>Phoebis philea</i>	year-round	year-round	cassia	
Cassius Blue <i>Leptotes cassius</i>	year-round	year-round	plumbago	
Gulf Fritillary <i>Agraulis vanillae</i>	year-round	year-round	passionvine	
Zebra <i>Heliconius charitonius</i>	year-round	year-round	passionvine	peaks in spring
Julia <i>Dryas iulia</i>	year-round	year-round	passionvine	

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COMMON BUTTERFLIES FOR YOUR GARDEN & YARD

(continued)

NAME	FLIGHT PERIOD	CATERPILLAR SEASON	CATERPILLAR FOOD PLANTS	COMMENTS
White Peacock <i>Anartia jatrophae</i>	year-round	year-round	water hyssop, wild petunia	
Monarch <i>Danaus plexippus</i>	year-round	year-round	milkweeds	peaks in spring, fall
Queen <i>Danaus gilippus</i>	year-round	year-round	milkweeds	

LOCAL & UNUSUAL BUTTERFLIES FOR YOUR GARDEN & YARD

NAME	CATERPILLAR FOOD PLANTS
Zebra Swallowtail <i>Eurytides marcellus</i>	pawpaw
Eastern Tiger Swallowtail <i>Papilio glaucus</i>	sweetbay, willow, ash
Palamedes Swallowtail <i>Papilio palamedes</i>	red bay
Sleepy Orange <i>Eurema nicippe</i>	partridge pea, clover, senna
Atala <i>Eumaeus atala</i>	coontie
Variegated Fritillary <i>Euptoieta claudia</i>	passionvines, beggarticks
Phaon Crescent <i>Phyciodes phaon</i>	matchweed (creeping Charlie)
Pearl Crescent <i>Phyciodes tharos</i>	asters
Red Admiral <i>Vanessa atalanta</i>	nettles, false nettles, hops
Common Buckeye <i>Junonia coenia</i>	plantain, snapdragon, matchweed (<i>Lippia =Phyla nodiflora</i>), wild petunia (<i>Ruellia</i>)
Malachite <i>Siproeta stelenes</i>	green shrimp plant (<i>Blechnum</i>)
Viceroy <i>Limenitis archippus</i>	wild petunia (<i>Ruellia</i>)
Duskywings <i>Erynnis</i>	willows, plums
small grass skippers (Hesperiinae)	oaks, common, but not in manicured lawn habitats, unless there's Bermuda grass

GENERAL COMMENTS ABOUT GARDENING IN THIS REGION

USDA ZONE: 10

We mainly have sandy soils since most of our house pads are on fill. Some of us with larger lots may have low spots that are wetter and allow for a wider diversity of plants. Those with sandy soil should feel free to amend parts of your garden with peat, humus, and cow manure for wetland plants. Although sandy soils can't hold as much moisture as richer soils, plants really don't need all that much watering once they're established. Plan to irrigate only during dry periods. An excellent resource is "Gardening for Butterflies and Children in South Florida" by Anne Kilmer, a detailed booklet printed courtesy of The Palm Beach Post of West Palm Beach, Florida.

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