



NORTH AMERICAN BUTTERFLY ASSOCIATION

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FLOWERS FOR THE BUTTERFLY GARDEN

by Ann Swengel, 1995

Butterfly tastes vary regionally. Some flowers listed here, while usually attractive, may not be popular with butterflies in your garden. Part of the fun of butterfly gardening is discovering which nectar sources are the favorites in your area. Consult your local agricultural extension office to find out what USDA zone your area falls in. Remember these zones are regional averages. Your particular site may be cooler or warmer than average for your area. Except as noted, these plants prefer sunny situations (half/full sun).

- A alien/exotic (not native to North America)
- N native to North America (different species native to different regions)
- E easy to grow
- * top nectar source for butterflies
- invasive, spreads quickly and can choke out other plants

PLANT	ZONES	COMMENTS
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TREES

AN	Buckeye (<i>Aesculus</i>)	5-8 tolerates shade; prefers rich moist well-drained soil
N *	Catclaw Acacia (<i>Acacia greggii</i>)	8-10 thorny; tolerates heat and drought (southwestern species only)
N -	Locust (<i>Robinia</i>)	4-9 thorny, fast-growing, tolerates heat, drought, soil type, neglect; suckers
N	Mesquite (<i>Prosopis juliflora</i>)	7-9 thorny; tolerates heat, drought; prefers alkaline soil (SW species)
A	Mimosa, Silktree (<i>Albizia julibrissin</i>)	7-10 fast-growing; short-lived; prefers alkaline soil, heat
N	Redbud (<i>Cercis</i>)	2-8 tolerant of soil type and amount of sun; hardiness varies among species
AN	Wild Cherry (<i>Prunus</i>)	3-10 fragrant; hardiness varies among spp.

SHRUBS

N -	Blackberry, Bramble (<i>Rubus</i>)	4-8 needs moderate fertility and moisture
AN	Blue/Huckleberry (<i>Vaccinium</i>)	4-8 need rich, well-drained acid soil
N E	Bush Cinquefoil (<i>Potentilla fruticosa</i>)	2-8 tolerates drought, poor drainage, soil type, city conditions, part shade; long flowering season; care-free
A *	Butterfly bush (<i>Buddleia davidii</i>)	5-9 dies back to roots in cold areas; prefers rich well-drained soil, sun;

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N *	Ceanothus: Buckbrush, New Jersey Tea (<i>Ceanothus</i>)	4-10	vigorous & rangy; easy from seed needs well-drained light soil, sun; drought tolerant; hardiness varies
A	Heath (<i>Erica</i>)	4-8	needs moist well-drained acid peat; good ground cover; hardiness varies
N	Indigo bush (<i>Amorpha fruticosa</i>)	5-9	prefers moist fertile soil
N *	Labrador Tea (<i>Ledum groenlandicum</i>)	1-6	needs moist acid peat soil
AN *-	Lantana (<i>Lantana</i>)	8-10	grow as pot plant or annual in North; needs good drainage, tolerates heat
A E*	Lilac (<i>Syringa vulgaris</i>)	4-7	prefers neutral rich moist soil, sun; tolerates shade, city conditions, neglect; fragrant; easy from seed
N	Madrone, Manzanita (<i>Arctostaphylos</i>)	7-9	tolerates drought
AN E	Meadowsweet, Spiraea (<i>Spiraea</i>)	4-10	fast-growing; tolerant of soil type
N *	Rabbitbrush (<i>Chrysothamnus nauseosus</i>)	3-9	tolerates soil type, heat, drought; prune (blooms on new growth) (W sp.)
N	Coralberry, Snowberry, Wolfberry (<i>Symphoricarpos</i>)	3-8	tolerates shade, soil type, city conditions; hard from seed; suckers
N -	Sumac (<i>Rhus</i>)	4-8	drought and city tolerant; relatively short-lived; spreads by suckers
N E	Sweet Pepperbush (<i>Clethra alnifolia</i>)	3-8	tolerates shade, poor drainage, acid soil, coastal salt; fragrant; prefers rich wet soil

HERBACEOUS PERENNIALS

A	Alfalfa (<i>Medicago sativa</i>)	3-9	needs well-drained soil
N	Alpine Sunflower, Goldflower (<i>Hymenoxys</i>)	2-4	needs well-drained soil (western mountain species)
AN E*	Aster (<i>Aster</i>)	3-9	requirements vary among species; most tolerate soil type, shade; most prefer well-drained soil
N *	Beggar-ticks, Spanish Needles Sticktight (<i>Bidens</i>)	5-10	adaptable; requirements and hardiness vary among species
N	Birdfoot violet (<i>Viola pedata</i>)	4-9	needs well-drained soil; flowers early in spring
N E	Black-eyed Susan (<i>Rudbeckia hirta</i>)	3-9	tolerates poor dry soil, heat, drought; short-lived perennial
N	Blanketflower, Indian blanket (<i>Gaillardia</i>)	4-9	needs sun, well-drained soil that is not rich; tolerates heat, drought
N *	Blazingstar, Gayfeather (<i>Liatris</i>)	3-9	slow to grow from seed; requirements vary with species
N	Blue Flag Iris (<i>Iris</i>)	3-8	easily propagated by division of rhizome; needs moist, rich soil
N *	Buckwheat (<i>Eriogonum</i>)	5-10	most varieties prefer well-drained soil; tolerate heat (mostly W spp.)
N E*	Butterfly (Orange) Milkweed (<i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>)	4-10	prefers light well-drained soil, sun; tolerates heat, drought in spring

N E	Coreopsis, Tickseed (<i>Coreopsis lanceolata</i>)	4-9	prefers well-drained soil, sun; tolerates poor, rocky, sandy soil
N E*	Goldenrod (<i>Solidago</i>)	3-10	adaptable to most soils; requirements vary; does not cause hayfever
N *	Ironweed (<i>Vernonia</i>)	3-9	prefers rich moist soil; tall
N	Joe-pye-weed (<i>Eupatorium</i>)	3-9	prefers rich moist soil; tall
A -	Knapweed, Centaurea (<i>Centaurea</i>)	4-8	prefers well-drained soil, sun
AN	Lupine (<i>Lupinus</i>)	3-9	prefers well-drained soil; hardiness and requirements vary
N E*	Milkweed (<i>Asclepias</i>)	3-10	hardiness and requirements vary
N *	Mistflower, Wild Ageratum, Blue Boneset (<i>Eupatorium coelestinum</i>)	6-10	prefers rich moist soil and light to partial shade; forms thickets
N E*	Monarda (Bee-balm, Wild bergamot) (<i>Monarda</i>)	4-9	tolerates shade; requirements vary with species
N *	Mountain Mint (<i>Pycnanthemum</i>)	4-9	prefers moist, well-drained soil
N	Ox-eye, False Sunflower (<i>Heliopsis</i>)	4-9	prefers moist well-drained average soil, sun; tolerates heat
A E-	Ox-eye Daisy, Shasta Daisy (<i>Chrysanthemum</i>)	3-9	prefer well-drained fertile soil; tolerate heat, drought, part shade
A	Pincushion Flower, Scabiosa (<i>Scabiosa</i>)	3-9	requires well-drained moist nonacid soil, sun
N *	Purple coneflower (<i>Echinacea</i>)	4-9	prefers well-drained soil; tolerates heat, drought, light shade
AN	Sage, Salvia (<i>Salvia</i>)	5-10	prefers well-drained soil; tolerates heat, drought, poor soil, shade; some grown as annuals
N	Sneezeweed (<i>Helenium autumnale</i>)	4-9	prefers moist rich soil, sun; tolerates clay; does not cause hay fever
AN	Stonecrop (<i>Sedum</i>)	3-9	thrive in heat, drought, poor soil; prefers well-drained soil
N *	Sunflower (<i>Helianthus</i>)	3-10	many kinds tolerate poor soil, heat; hardiness and requirements vary
A -	Sweet-clover (<i>Melilotus</i>)	3-10	adaptable
AN	Vervain (<i>Verbena</i>)	4-9	prefers well-drained soil, sun; tolerates poor soil; hardiness varies
AN	Wild Geranium, Cranesbill (<i>Geranium</i>)	4-8	tolerates soil type, shade
N	Wild Indigo, False Indigo (<i>Baptisia</i>)	4-10	prefers well-drained poor soil, tolerates some shade; slow from seed
AN E	Yarrow (<i>Achillea</i>)	3-10	tolerates poor soil, heat, drought, partial shade

VINES

N	Milkvine, Climbing Milkweed (<i>Sarcostemma</i>)	8-10	needs well-drained moist soil (southwestern species)
A -	Morning Glory (<i>Ipomoea purpurea</i> & others)	6-10	tolerates heat, poor soil, drought; self-seeding annual; plant outdoors

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