



GARDENING for BUTTERFLIES in New England

TO ATTRACT THE MOST BUTTERFLIES
TO YOUR GARDEN, PLANT BOTH NECTAR
FLOWERS AND CATERPILLAR FOOD
PLANTS

MY "TOP FIFTEEN" NECTAR PLANTS

Butterfly Bush* (*Buddleia davidii* . *B. alternifolia* is also good.)
Zinnias (tall, flat-topped varieties e.g. 'State Farm', 'Cut & Come
Again', Carrousel. "Profusion" is okay. NOT pompoms.)
Marigolds (*Tagetes* spp.) (Taller, single varieties; NOT pompoms.)
Milkweeds: Swamp Milkweed (*Aesclepias incarnata*), Butterfly Weed
(*A. tuberosa*), and Common Milkweed (*A. syriaca*- aggressive).
New England Aster (*A. novae-angliae*), and most other asters.
Scabiosa* ('Butterfly Blue' lives up to its name.)
Purple Coneflower (and other *Echinacea* spp.)
New Jersey Tea (*Ceanothus americanus*)
Sweet Pepperbush (*Clethra alnifolia*) (all varieties)
Gayfeather (*Liatris* spp.) (*L. ligulistylis*, *pycnostachya*, *koboldii*, etc.)
Coreopsis spp. (Even 'Moonbeam' works for me)
Joe-Pye Weed (*Eupatorium* spp. – all varieties)
Cupplant or Compass Plant (*Silphium* spp.)
Mexican sunflower (*Tithonia*) (excellent in late summer)
Verbena: *V. bonariensis* in late summer and fall . Other verbenas okay.

ALSO GOOD: Chives (and other *Allium* spp.); *Senecio aureus* (wetland native for early bloom); Bee balm (*Monarda*); Thyme; Catmint* (*Nepeta*); Black-eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia*); Privet**; Dandelions**; Phlox; Centranthus*; Valerian*; Dogbane (caution: aggressive); vetch; thistles; Mountain-Mint (*Pycnanthemum* spp.); Mint (*Mentha* spp.) (caution: aggressive); Lilacs*; Cosmos; Sedums; Helenium; Blackberry; Raspberry; Lavender*; Galliardia; Red Clover*; Birds-foot Trefoil**; Button-bush (*Cephalanthus*); Black Cohosh (*Cimifuga racemosa*); Bidens (especially *Bidens alba*, which is annual in our climate); Lantana (not hardy); Pentas* (not hardy). For Moths: *Oenothera* spp.; *Nicotiana* spp.

*not native to the Americas, but well-behaved in our area **not native, may be aggressive

SOURCES FOR PLANTS AND SEEDS : Prairie Nursery; Prairie Moon Nursery
www.prairiemoonnursery.com ; Select Seeds www.selectseeds.com ; New England Wild

Flower Society www.newfs.org ; Churchill Nursery, Exeter, NH; Russell's Garden Center, Sudbury, MA; Bigelow Nurseries, Northboro, MA; Sunlight Gardens, TN; Johnnies Selected Seeds, Winslow, ME; and many others.

ESSENTIAL LARVAL FOOD PLANTS FOR YOUR GARDEN

Red Admiral: Nettles (*Urtica dioica***), False Nettle (*Boehmeria cylindrica*), Hops (*Humulus lupulus*)

American Lady: Pussytoes (*Antennaria*- all species); Pearly Everlasting (*Anaphalis margaritacea*); Cudweed (*Gnaphalium obtusifolium*, etc.); Globe Thistle (*Echinops ritro**).

Black Swallowtail: Dill (*Anethum graveolens**); Queen Anne's Lace (*Daucus carota***); Fennel (*Foeniculum vulgare***); Parsley (*Petroselinum**); Lovage (*Levisticum officinale**); Scotch Lovage (*Ligusticum scoticum*); Rue (*Ruta graveolens**).

Spicebush Swallowtail: Spicebush (*Lindera benzoin*); Sassafras

Monarch: Milkweeds (*Asclepias* spp) all, but especially Common Milkweed

Sulphurs, Eastern Tailed-Blue: Alfalfa*; Clovers*; Lespedeza, Desmodium, Lathyrus

Baltimore Checkerspot: Turtlehead (*Chelone glabra*); Plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*)

Pipevine Swallowtail: Dutchman's Pipe (*Aristolochia durior*)

Pearl Crescent: Asters; **Fritillaries:** Violets

Silver-spotted Skipper: Black locust (*Robinia*) (very aggressive); Honey locust (*Gleditsia*); Groundnut (*Apios americana*) (aggressive, but not as much as *Robinia*).

Viceroy: Poplars and Willows **Mourning Cloak:** Willows

Red-spotted Purple: Black Cherry (*Prunus serotina*); poplars, birches, willows

Eastern Comma; Question Mark; Milbert's Tortoiseshell: Stinging Nettles; Hops; Elms

American Copper: Sorrel, Dock (*Rumex* spp.)**

Spring/Summer Azure: Black Cherry (*Prunus serotina*); *Spirea*; *Vaccinium*

Least and Peck's Skippers: Grasses: *Poa* spp.; *Panicum* spp.

Crossline, Cobweb, and Dusted Skippers: Little Bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*)

BUTTERFLY RESOURCES

Sharon Stichter, www.butterfliesofmassachusetts.net History of butterflies in our state, detailed host plant discussion, abundance charts, distribution maps. 2010.

Massachusetts Butterfly Club www.massbutterflies.org In-state photographs of all species, membership information, field trips, checklists, guide to good field sites.

Jeffrey Glassberg, Butterflies Through Binoculars: The East. Oxford University Press, 1993. The best field guide for our region.

Rick Cech, Butterflies of the East Coast. Princeton University Press, 2005. Beautiful up-to-date reference book; includes identification, host plants and habitat.