

Butterfly Plants for the Lower Rio Grande Valley

Compiled by:

Mike Quinn, Invertebrate Biologist

Texas Parks & Wildlife, Sept. 2002

<i>Scientific Name</i>	Common Name	Sun	Nectar	Flwr Color	Blooms	Caterpillar Food Plant for these species:	Remarks
Ground Covers							
<i>Justicia (Siph) pilosella</i>	Tube Tongue	Full Sun	Fair	Lavender	Sp-Fall	Tiny & Elada Checkerspot, Vesta Crescent	
<i>Phyla incisa</i>	Texas Frog Fruit	Full Sun	Excel	White	Sp-Fall	Phaon Crescent, White Peacock, Common Buckeye	
<i>Phyla strigulosa</i>	Frog Fruit	Full Sun	Excel	White	Sp-Fall	White Peacock	
<i>Sedum texanum</i>	Stonecrop	Full Sun	Fair	yellow	Winter	Xami Hairstreak	succulent

Perennials (1 - 3 feet)

<i>Asclepias oenotheroides</i>	Hierba de Zizotes	Full Sun	Fair	Green/Yellow	Sp-Fall	Monarch	
<i>Dicliptera vahliana</i>	Dicliptera	Pt. Shade	Fair	Red	Spring	Banded Peacock, Rosita Patch, Texan & Cuban Crescents	
<i>Eup. betonicifolium</i>	Betony Mistflower	Pt/Full Sun	Fair	Bluish Purple	Sp-Fall	Rounded Metalmark	
<i>Eupatorium greggii</i>	Gregg's Mistflower	Pt/Full Sun	Excel	Bluish Purple	Sp-Fall	Nectar for Queens, Food for Rawson's Metalmark	not native
<i>Heliotrop (6) spp.</i>	Heliotrope	Full Sun	Excel	White	All Year	Adult Nectar Source	weed?!
<i>Hibiscus cardiophyllus</i>	Heart Leaf Hibiscus	Full Sun	Excel	Deep Red	Spring	Yojoa & Mallow Scrub-Hairstreak	native
<i>Justicia (3) spp.</i>	Water Willow	Pt. Shade	Good	Purple	Sum-Fall	Malachite, Banded Peacock	
<i>Lantana macropoda</i>	Desert Lantana	Full Sun	Good	White	Sp-Fall	Adult Nectar Source	
<i>Monarda citriodora</i>	Horsemint	Full Sun	Good	White/Pink	Sp-Fall	Adult Nectar Source	
<i>Pavonia lasiopetala</i>	Rose Pavonia	Full Sun	Excel	Pink	Sp-Fall	Adult Nectar Source	not native
<i>Plumbago scandens</i>	White Plumbago	Sun-Shade	Excel	White	Sp-Fall	Marine & Cassius Blues	Is native
<i>Prosopis reptans</i>	Screwbean Mesquite	Full Sun	Fair	Yellow	Sp-Fall	Clytie Ministreak, Tailed Orange, Blue Metalmark	
<i>Rivina humilis</i>	Pigeon Berry	Sun-Shade	Poor	White	All Year	Goodson's Greenstreak	
<i>Salvia coccinea</i>	Scarlet Sage	Full Sun	Good	Scarlet	All Year	Adult Nectar Source	
<i>Verbena (13) spp.</i>	Vervain	Full Sun	Good	Purple-White	Sp-varies	Adult Nectar Source	
<i>Zexmenia hispida</i>	Orange Zexmenia	Full Sun	Excel	Orange	Sp-Fall	Adult Nectar Source	Xeric

A few of the many butterfly and plant field guides that may be helpful:

Butterflies Through Binoculars, The West

Jeffrey Glassberg, 2001. Oxford Univ. Press

The Butterflies of North America.

James A. Scott. 1986. Stanford Univ. Press

National Audubon Society Field Guide to North American Butterflies

Robert Michael Pyle, 1983. Alfred A. Knopf

Plants of the Rio Grande Delta

Alfred Richardson. 1995. Univ. of Texas Press

Wildflowers and Other Plants of Texas Beaches and Islands

Alfred Richardson. 2002. Univ. of Texas Press

Trees, Shrubs and Cacti of South Texas

Everitt, J. H., & D. L. Drawe. 1993. Texas Tech Univ. Press

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Shrubs (> 3 feet)							
<i>Acacia greggii</i>	Catclaw Acacia	Full Sun	Fair	White/Cream	Sp-Sum	Marine Blue	
<i>Adelia vaseyi</i>	Adelia	Sun-Shade	Fair	Petals Absnt	Sp-Sum	Mexican Bluewing	
<i>Aloysia gratissima</i>	White Brush	Full Sun	Excel	White	Sp-Fall	Adult Nectar Source	
<i>Aloysia macrostachya</i>	Sweet Stem	Full Sun	Good	Light Purple	Sp-Sum	Adult Nectar Source	showy
<i>Amyris (2) spp.</i>	Torchwood	Full Sun	Fair	White	Sp-Fall	Giant Swallowtail	
<i>Asclepias curassavica</i>	Mexican Milkweed	Sun-Shade	Excel	Red & Yellow	Sp-Fall	Queen, Monarch & Tiger Mimic-Queen	not native
<i>Aster subulatus</i>	Aster	Full Sun	Excel	Bluish Purple	Sum-Fall	Adult Nectar Source	annual
<i>Buddleia davidii</i>	Butterfly Bush	Full Sun	Excel	Various		Adult Nectar Source	not native
<i>Buddleia sessilifolia</i>	Butterfly Bush	Part Sun	Good	Yellow	Sp-Sum	Adult Nectar Source	Is native!
<i>Cassia fasciculata</i>	Partridge Pea	Full Sun	Fair	Yellow	Sp-Sum	Cloudless Sulphur, Little Yellow	annual
<i>Cassia lindheimeriana</i>	Lindheimer Senna	Full Sun	Fair	Yellow	Sum-Fall	Sleepy Orange	
<i>Cassia (4) spp.</i>	Senna	Full Sun	Fair	Yellow	Sum-Fall		
<i>Cirsium texanum</i>	Thistle	Full Sun	Excel	Pink	Sp-Sum	Adult Nectar Source	annual
<i>Coursetia axillaris</i>	Baby Bonnets	Full Sun	Good	Pink	Sp-Fall	Southern Dogface	thornless
<i>Eupatorium azureum</i>	Blue Mistflower	Pt/Full Sun	Fair	Bluish Purple	Spring	Adult Nectar Source	
<i>Eupatorium incarnatum</i>	White Mistflower	Pt/Full Sun	Excel	White	Fall-Wint	Adult Nectar Source	
<i>Eupatorium odoratum</i>	Crucita	Pt/Full Sun	Excel	Bluish Purple	Fall-Wint	Rounded Metalmark, one of the best nectar plants	SUPERB
<i>Eysenhardtia Texana</i>	Texas Kidneywood	Full Sun	Good	White	Sp-Fall	Southern Dogface	
<i>Forestiera angustifolium</i>	Elbowbush	Full Sun	Excel	Petals Absnt	Sp-Fall	Adult Nectar Source	
<i>Karwinskia humboltiana</i>	Coyotillo	Full Sun	Excel	(small)	Sp-Sum	Two-barred Flasher	
<i>Lantana camara</i>	West India Lantana	Full Sun	Excel	Pink/Yellow	Sp-Fall	Lantana Scrub, Tropical Green & Red-spotted Hair.	not native
<i>Lantana horrida</i>	Texas Lantana	Full Sun	Excel	Red/Yellow	Sp-Fall	Adult Nectar Source	
<i>Lantana montivedensis</i>	Trailing Lantana	Full Sun	Good	Magenta		Adult Nectar Source	
<i>Leucophyllum frutescens</i>	Cenizo	Full Sun	Fair	Pink	after Rain	Theona Checkerspot	xeric
<i>Lippia alba</i>	White Lippia	Full Sun	Good	Reddish	All Year	White Peacock, Lantana Scrub-Hairstreak	spreads
<i>Lippia graveolens</i>	Scented Lippia	Full Sun	Good	White	Sp-Fall	White Peacock, Lantana Scrub-Hairstreak	
<i>Malpighia glabra</i>	Barbados Cherry	Sun-Shade	Fair	Pink	Sp-Fall	White-patched & Brown-banded Skip., Cassius Blue	
<i>Malvaviscus arboreus</i>	Turk's Cap	Shade-Sun	Excel	Deep Red	Sp-Fall	Glassy-winged Skipper, Turk's-cap White-Skipper	
<i>Palafoxia texana</i>	Palafoxia	Sun-Shade	Excel	Pink	Sp-Fall	Adult Nectar Source	annual
<i>Salvia ballotiflora</i>	Shrubby Blue Sage	Full Sun	Good	Light Blue	Sp-Fall	Adult Nectar Source	showy
<i>Solidago spp.</i>	Goldenrod	Full Sun	Excel	Yellow	Sum-Fall	Adult Nectar Source	annual
<i>Verbesina encelioides</i>	Cowpen Daisy	Full Sun	Good	Yellow	Sp-Fall	Bordered Patch	annual
<i>Viguiera stenoloba</i>	Golden Eye Daisy	Full Sun	Good	Yellow	Sp-Fall	Adult Nectar Source	showy

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Trees							
<i>Acacia berlandieri</i>	Guajillo	Full Sun	Excel	White/Cream	Spring	Adult Nectar Source	SUPERB
<i>Bauhinia mexicana</i>	Orchid Tree	Full Sun	Good	Pink or White	Sp-Fall	Tailed Aguna, Long-tailed Skipper, Gilbert's Flasher	not native
<i>Bumelia lanuginosa</i>	La Coma	Full Sun	Excel	White	Sp-Sum	Adult Nectar Source	
<i>Caesalpinia mexicana</i>	Mexican Caesalpinia	Full Sun	Fair	Bright Yellow	Sp-Sum	Curve-winged Metalmark, Apricot Sulphur	
<i>Cephalanthus salicifolius</i>	Mex. Button-Bush	Full Sun	Excel	Creamy/Wh	Sum-Fall	Adult Nectar Source	SUPERB
<i>Citharexylum berlandieri</i>	Fiddlewood	Full Sun	Excel	White	Spring	Adult Nectar Source	
<i>Cordia boissieri</i>	Wild Olive	Full Sun	Excel	White	All Year	Adult Nectar Source	
<i>Ehretia anacua</i>	Anacua	Full Sun	Excel	White	Sp-Fall	Adult Nectar Source	
<i>Erythrina herbacea</i>	Coral Bean	Full Sun	Good	Deep Coral	Spring	Adult Nectar Source	showy
<i>Guaiacum angustifolia</i>	Guayacan	Full Sun	Fair	Purple	Sp-Sum	Lyside Sulphur	
<i>Helietta parvifolia</i>	Baretta	Full Sun	Fair	Green/White	Sp-Sum	Giant Swallowtail	
<i>Pithecellobium dulce</i>	Guamuchil	Full Sun				Red-bordered Pixie	not native
<i>Psidium cattleianum</i>	Strawberry Guava	Full Sun				Guava Skipper	not native
<i>Psidium guajava</i>	Common Guava	Full Sun				Guava Skipper	not native
<i>Yucca treculeana</i>	Spanish Dagger	Full Sun	Fair	Creamy	Spring	Yucca Giant-Skipper	
<i>Zanthoxylum fagara</i>	Colima	Full Sun	Fair	Green/White	Spring	Thaos Swtail/Sickle-winged Skipper/Dingy Purplewing	
Vines							
<i>Aristolochia marshii</i>	Pipe Vine	Full Sun	Fair	Reddish-Purp	Spring	Pipevine & Polydamus Swallowtail, Cattle Heart	
<i>Cardiospermum halicacal</i>	Common Ballon Vine	Sun-Shade	Fair	(small)	All Year	Silver-banded & Red-lined Scrub-Hairstreak	
<i>Clematis drummondii</i>	Old Man's Beard	Full Sun	poor	Blond	Sp-Fall	Fatal Metalmark	
<i>Cynanchum (2) spp.</i>	Climbing Milkweed	Shade	Fair	Cream	Sp-Fall	Queen & Soldier	
<i>Ipomoea (6) spp.</i>	Morning Glory	Sun-Shade	Fair	Purplish	all year	Purplish-black Skipper, Morning Glory Pellicia	
<i>Matelea reticulata</i>	Pearl Mikweed	Shade	poor	Pearly	Sp-Fall	Queen & Monarch	
<i>Mikania (1) sp.</i>	Climbing Hemp Weed	Full Sun	Fair	White	Sum-Fall	Tropical Greenstreak	
<i>Passiflora filipes</i>	Spread-Lobe Passion	Pt. Shade	Fair	Yellow/Green	All Year		
<i>Passiflora foetida</i>	Corona de Cristo	Full Sun	Fair	Light Purple	Sp-Fall	Gulf Fritillary	aggressive
<i>Passiflora suberosa</i>	"Corky" Passion Vine	Pt. Shade	Fair	Yellow/Green	All Year	Zebra Heliconian, Gulf Fritillary	
<i>Passiflora tenuiloba</i>	Slender Lobe Passion	Full Sun	Fair	Yellow/Green	Sp-Fall	Gulf Fritillary, Julia Heliconian	
<i>Sarcostemma cynanchoid</i>	Climbing Milkweed	Sun-Shade	Fair	Greenish	Sum-Fall	Queen, Soldier & Monarch	
<i>Serjania brachycarpa</i>	Serjania	Full (Part)	Fair	Whitish-Greer	Sum-Fall	Common Banner	
<i>Tragia glanduligera</i>	Noseburn	Full Sun	Fair	Creamy	Sp-Fall	Common Mestra, Red Rim	