



# NORTH AMERICAN BUTTERFLY ASSOCIATION

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## EASTERN KANSAS/WESTERN MISSOURI

by Lenora Larson

### TOP BUTTERFLY NECTAR FLOWERS

A number in front of a flower name indicates a particularly recommended plant (1 = most recommended). Numbers in "BLOOM SEASON" correspond to the month (4 = April, 5 = May, etc.). Abbreviations: A = alien species, N = native species.

FLOWER	HEIGHT	COLOR	BLOOM SEASON	ATTRACTED BUTTERFLIES	COMMENTS
A Dame's rocket <i>Hesperis matronalis</i>	3'	Lavender	4		Biennial; naturalized here
N Woodland phlox <i>Phlox divaricata</i>	8"	Blue	4		Perennial, self-seeds
A Apple tree <i>Malus</i>	25'	Pink	4-5	Comma, Question Mark	Valuable for rotted fruit
A Penstemon 'Husker Red' <i>Penstemon digitalis</i>	12'	White	4-5		Perennial; needs well-drained soil
A Alfalfa <i>Medicago sativa</i>	18"	Purple	4-frost	Especially sulphurs	Perennial & self-seeds
3 A Catmint <i>Nepeta x faassenii</i>			4-frost		Perennial, most dependable for Kansas climate
N Verbena <i>Verbena canadensis</i>	8"	Pink	4-frost		Perennial
N Bee balm (bergamont) <i>Monarda fistulosa</i>	18"	Lavender	5		Perennial
N Elderberry <i>Sambucus canadensis</i>	10'	White	5		Shrub. Edible berries
A Lavender <i>Lavendula</i>	18"	Blue-purple	5-6		Perennial; grow in gravel
N Milkweed <i>Asclepias syriaca</i>	4'	Pale pink	5-6		
N Prairie penstemon <i>Penstemon tubaeiflorus</i>	24'	White	5-6		Perennial; needs well-drained soil
A Cleome <i>Cleome spinosa</i>	3'	White, pink	5-frost		Annual; self-seeds
A Marigolds <i>Tagetes</i>	2'	Orange	5-frost		Annual, self-seeds
A Cosmos <i>Cosmos sulphureus</i>	2'	Orange	6		Annual, self-seeds; trim dead flowers

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EASTERN KANSAS/WESTERN MISSOURI

TOP BUTTERFLY NECTAR FLOWERS

(continued)

	FLOWER	HEIGHT	COLOR	BLOOM SEASON	ATTRACTED BUTTERFLIES	COMMENTS
	N Pale purple coneflower <i>Echinacea pallida</i>	3'	Pale pink	6		Perennial; not as popular as books say
4	N Button bush <i>Cephalanthus occidentalis</i>	4'	White	6-8		Shrub; needs rich soil & lots of extra watering
	A Hyssops <i>Agastache</i>	2'	Blue, coral pink	6-8		Perennial, self-seed
	A Pincushion flower <i>Scabiosa caucasica</i>	12"	Pink, blue	6-8		Perennial
	A Purple coneflower <i>E. purpurea</i>	30"	Pink	6-8		
	Red spider <i>Zinnia tenuifolia</i>	18"	Red	6-8		Annual, Prolific self-sower
	N Trumpet vine <i>Campsis radicans</i>	vine	Coral red	6-8	Especially sulphurs	Perennial; also hummingbird flower!
	A Nicotiana <i>Nicotiana glauca</i>	30"	White, pink	6-frost		Tender perennial, self-seeds
	A Vine petunia <i>Petunia multiflora</i>	vine	White, pink, purple	6-frost		Annual, self-seeds. Not the hybrids.
	N Prairie sundrop <i>Oenothera pilosella</i>	3'	Yellow	7		Perennial
	A Anise <i>Pimpinella anisum</i>	4'	Yellow	7-8		Aggressive self-seeder
	A Blue mist spirea <i>Caryopteris x clandonensis</i>	18"	Blue	7-8		Tender shrub; prune in March. Self-seeds.
	A Blood flower <i>Asclepias curassavica</i>	2'	Red	7-8		
	N Butterflyweed <i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>	2'	Orange	7-8		
	A Russian sage <i>Perovskia atriplicifolia</i>	2'	Lavender	7-8		Perennial-grow in gravel
	N Wild senna <i>Cassia marilandica</i>	4'	Yellow	7-8	Sulphurs	Loved by bees and flies. Self-seeds
	A Four o'clock <i>Mirabilis jalapa</i>	2'	Pink, yellow	7-9		Tender perennial, self-seeds
	N Meadow phlox <i>Phlox maculata</i>	3'	Deep pink	7-9		Perennial; needs extra moisture

**EASTERN KANSAS/WESTERN MISSOURI**

**TOP BUTTERFLY NECTAR FLOWERS**

(continued)

	<b>FLOWER</b>	<b>HEIGHT</b>	<b>COLOR</b>	<b>BLOOM SEASON</b>	<b>ATTRACTED BUTTERFLIES</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
	Summer phlox <i>Phlox paniculata</i>	3'	Pink	7-9		Perennial; needs extra moisture
N	Swamp milkweed <i>Asclepias incarnata</i>	3'	Pink	7-9		
1 A	Butterfly bush <i>Buddleia davidii</i>	5'	Lavender	7-frost	All	Shrub. Prune heavily in March; trim wilted flowers for constant bloom. Self-seeds. Annual
	Mexican zinnia <i>Zinnia angustifolia</i>	12"	White & orange	7-frost		
A	Summer salvia <i>Salvia coccinea</i>	18"	Red	7-frost	Especially sulphurs	Annual, self-seeds
A	Verbena <i>Verbena bonariensis</i>	3'	Lavender	7-frost		Tender perennial, self-seeds
2 A	Zinnia <i>Zinnia elegans</i>	3'	Red, pink orange	7-frost		Annual, self-seeds. Old-fashioned types; not fancy hybrids
	Zinnia 'Cherry Profusion' <i>Zinnia</i>	18"	Pink	7-frost		Annual
A	Cosmos <i>Cosmos bipinnatis</i>	3'	White, pink	7-frost		Annual; self-seeds
N	Prairie sunflower <i>Helianthus maximiliani</i>	3'	Yellow	8		Perennial
N	Goldsturm sunflower <i>Rudbeckia fulgida</i>	2'	Yellow	8-9		Perennial
A	Mexican sunflower <i>Tithonia rotundifolia</i>	4-6'	Orange	8-9		Annual; self-seeds
N/A	Asters <i>Aster</i>	2'	Pink, blue	8-frost		Perennials; need well-drained soil

**NECTAR FLOWERS THAT DON'T WORK IN THIS REGION**

**FLOWER**

**COMMENTS**

I grow the milkweeds for their beauty and am more enthusiastic about the flowers than are the butterflies, who prefer Buddleia, Zinnia and Nepeta.

**EASTERN KANSAS/WESTERN MISSOURI**

**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.

<b>NAME</b>	<b>HEIGHT</b>	<b>BUTTERFLY</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
N Ash <i>Fraxinus americana</i>	100'	Eastern Tiger Swallowtail	
N Black cherry <i>Prunus serotina</i>	50'	Eastern Tiger Swallowtail, Red-spotted Purple	
N Cassia <i>Cassia fasciculata</i>	12"	Sulphurs	Excellent garden-worthy plants. Deadhead to avoid too much self-seeding
N Cassia <i>Cassia marilandica</i>	4'	Sulphurs	Excellent garden-worthy plants. Deadhead to avoid too much self-seeding
N Common milkweed <i>Asclepias syriaca</i>	3'	Monarch	Not used much; my huge flocks of Monarchs are migrants in the fall
N Eastern cottonwood <i>Populus</i>	100'	Red-spotted Purple, Viceroy	
N Eastern red cedar <i>Juniperus virginiana</i>	80'	Hairstreaks	
N Hackberry <i>Celtis</i>	50'	Question Mark, Hackberry Emperor	
N Hop tree <i>Ptelia trifoliata</i>	20'	Giant Swallowtail	
1 A Parsley, dill, fennel, anise		Black swallowtail	Check for eggs & young larvae before picking for kitchen. All but parsley self-seed.
N May pop <i>Passiflora incarnata</i>	vine	Gulf Fritillary, Variegated Fritillary	Spectacular flower & delicious fruit
N Paw-paw <i>Asimina trifoliata</i>	15'	Zebra Swallowtail	A native stand is about 3 miles way. It took about 10 years before Zebra Swallowtails discovered mine. Now common
N Pipevine <i>Aristolochia tomentosa</i>	vine	Pipevine Swallowtail	Took 7 years, but the Pipevine Swallowtails finally came and are now very common
A Rue <i>Ruta graveolens</i>	2'	Black Swallowtail, Giant Swallowtail	Short-lived perennial; vigorous self-seeder
2 A Snapdragon <i>Antirrhinum majus</i>	12"	Common Buckeye	Tender perennial; self-sows
N Spicebush <i>Lindera benzoin</i>	6'	Spicebush Swallowtail	It's been 10 years & still no butterflies, but I'm not giving up
3 N Violets <i>Viola species</i>	6"	Fritillaries	
N Willows <i>Salix fragilis</i>	80'	Eastern Tiger Swallowtail, Viceroy	Close proximity of native trees increases the variety and density of butterfly populations
N Wild plum & cherry <i>Prunus</i>	15'	Red-spotted Purple	

## EASTERN KANSAS/WESTERN MISSOURI

### COMMON BUTTERFLIES FOR YOUR GARDEN & YARD

A number in front of a butterfly name indicates a particularly likely species (1 = most expected to be seen). Numbers in "FLIGHT PERIOD" and "CATERPILLAR SEASON" correspond to the month (4 = April, 5 = May, etc.).

NAME	FLIGHT PERIOD	CATERPILLAR SEASON	CATERPILLAR FOOD PLANTS	COMMENTS
Zebra Swallowtail <i>Eurytides marcellus</i>	4 & 7	4 & 6	Paw-paw	
1 Black Swallowtail <i>Papilio polyxenes</i>	4-frost	4-frost	Carrot family	
Giant Swallowtail <i>Papilio cresphontes</i>	5-9	4-7	Rue & Ptelia	
Eastern Tiger Swallowtail <i>Papilio glaucus</i>	4-9	5-7	Cherry & ash trees	
Checkered White <i>Pontia protodice</i>	4-9	5-8	Crucifers (cabbage family)	
Cabbage White <i>Pieris rapae</i>	4-9	4-9	Crucifers (cabbage family)	
Clouded Sulphur <i>Colias philodice</i>	3-frost	4-10	Legumes, especially alfalfa	
2 Orange Sulphur <i>Colias eurytheme</i>	5-10	5-9	alfalfa	
3 Cloudless Sulphur <i>Phoebis sennae</i>	7-frost	8	Cassia	
Gray Hairstreak <i>Strymon melinus</i>	4-9	5-8	Legumes	
Eastern Tailed-Blue <i>Everes comyntas</i>	4-9	4-9	Legumes, especially alfalfa	
Spring Azure <i>Celastrina ladon</i>	4-9	4-9	Swamp dogwood	
American Snout <i>Libytheana carinenta</i>	7		Hackberry	
Variiegated Fritillary <i>Euptoieta claudia</i>	6-10	7-8	Violets, passionvine	
Great Spangled Fritillary <i>Speyeria cybele</i>	5-9	overwinters	Violets	
Meadow Fritillary <i>Boloria bellona</i>	5-8	5-8	Violets	
Silvery Checkerspot <i>Chlosyne nycteis</i>	5-9	5-7	Sunflowers	
Pearl Crescent <i>Phyciodes tharos</i>	4-10	5-8	Asters	
Question Mark <i>Polygonia interrogationis</i>	2-11		Hops & hackberries	Attracted by rotten apples

**EASTERN KANSAS/WESTERN MISSOURI**

**COMMON BUTTERFLIES FOR YOUR GARDEN & YARD**

(continued)

<b>NAME</b>	<b>FLIGHT PERIOD</b>	<b>CATERPILLAR SEASON</b>	<b>CATERPILLAR FOOD PLANTS</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
Eastern Comma <i>Polygonia comma</i>	3-11		Hops	Attracted by rotten apples
American Lady <i>Vanessa virginiensis</i>	5-frost	5-9	Everlastings and related	Common some years, other years almost absent
Painted Lady <i>Vanessa cardui</i>	5-frost	5-9	Thistles	
Red Admiral <i>Vanessa atalanta</i>	5-frost	5-9	Nettles	
Common Buckeye <i>Junonia coenia</i>	5-10	6-10	Snapdragons, plantain	
Red-spotted Purple <i>Limenitis arthemis astyanax</i>	5-9	overwinters	Cherry and others	
Viceroy <i>Limenitis archippus</i>	5-10	6-9	Willow	
Goatweed Leafwing <i>Anaea andria</i>	4-10		Goatweeds	
Hackberry Emperor <i>Asterocampa celtis</i>	6-9		Hackberry	Some years very abundant
Common Wood-Nymph <i>Cercyonis pegala</i>	6-9	6	Grasses	
Monarch <i>Danaus plexippus</i>	8-10	7	Milkweeds	Migrates through in Aug./Sep., rarely breeds here
Silver-spotted Skipper <i>Epargyreus clarus</i>	5-10	5-10	Locusts	
Northern Cloudywing <i>Thorybes pylades</i>	5-9	5-6	Legumes	

**LOCAL & UNUSUAL BUTTERFLIES FOR YOUR GARDEN & YARD**

Numbers in "FLIGHT PERIOD" and "CATERPILLAR SEASON" correspond to the month (4 = April, 5 = May, etc.), with < meaning earlier in the month, m the middle of the month, and > late in the month.

<b>NAME</b>	<b>FLIGHT PERIOD</b>	<b>CATERPILLAR SEASON</b>	<b>CATERPILLAR FOOD PLANTS</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
Pipevine Swallowtail <i>Battus philenor</i>	6 & 7	5-6	Pipevine	Finally arrived 7 years postplanting

## EASTERN KANSAS/WESTERN MISSOURI

### LOCAL & UNUSUAL BUTTERFLIES FOR YOUR GARDEN & YARD

(continued)

NAME	FLIGHT PERIOD	CATERPILLAR SEASON	CATERPILLAR FOOD PLANTS	COMMENTS
Bronze Copper <i>Lycaena hyllus</i>	6-10		Dock	
'Olive' Juniper Hairstreak <i>Callophrys siva gryneus</i>	4-7	5	Red cedar	
Gulf Fritillary <i>Agraulis vanillae</i>	8	8	Passionvine	seen twice
Gorgone Checkerspot <i>Chlosyne gorgone</i>	5-9	6	Sunflowers, ragweeds	
Mourning Cloak <i>Nymphalis antiopa</i>	4		Willow, ash	occasionally seen by woodlot
Hayburst's Sootywing <i>Staphylus hayhurstii</i>	4-9		Amaranth	

### GENERAL COMMENTS ABOUT GARDENING IN THIS REGION

**USDA ZONE:** 6; **AHS heat zone** 7

Our property, Long Lips Farm, is at the edge of the prairie on green rolling hills. The land would be covered in mixed hardwood forest if civilization had not arrived to convert most of it to agriculture. We are surrounded by farm fields with hedge rows, while we maintain a large woodlot and a swamp area, with a four-acre lake in addition to pasture. The yard is certified as a Backyard Wildlife Habitat™ by the National Wildlife Federation.

Winters are weather roller-coasters; temperatures bounce between the 20s and 50s each week. Occasional snowfalls of 3 to 10 inches melt within a few days. The temperatures plunge to zero at least once a year; otherwise we would be zone 7 or 8. The first hard frost is usually at Thanksgiving and the last frost may be from March 15 to May 7, making gamblers out of fearless gardeners. The summers are intensely hot and humid with very sporadic rain. These are tough conditions, made worse by the near constant wind. Days of constant blast of 30 to 45 miles per hour are not uncommon, especially in spring and summer.

The soil is either heavy clay or prairie loam, less than a foot deep, sitting on limestone and shale. All my flower beds have been dug out with shovel and pick to a depth of 3 feet and all soil replaced by a mixture of compost and pea gravel--the ratio depending on the plants to be grown. Sparse rainfall is supplemented by water pumped from the lake during the summer and fall. No pesticides or commercial fertilizers are used. My butterfly garden is 20 years old and has grown to two acres of flower beds. My flowers are either perennials or non-hybrid annuals that are active self-sowers. Spring requires almost no planting, but initial thinning and weeding is necessary to control volunteers who have chosen undesirable locations. Thereafter, heavy mulch and dense plantings control the weeds.



**EASTERN KANSAS/WESTERN MISSOURI**



Figure 1—"Prairie" garden has grasses with white and yellow *Zinnia angustifolia*, red *Salvia coccinia* and pink *Cleome spinosa*. (September)



Figure 2—Garden has lavender-blue *Nepeta X fassenii* and pink *Verbena canadensis*. (May)



## EASTERN KANSAS/WESTERN MISSOURI



Figure 3—Wall garden has coral Agastache, pink Zinnia 'Cherry Profusion', lavender Vine Petunias, white & pink *Nicotiana alata*, and a blue haze of *Nepeta* (August).