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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PLANT</th>
<th>ZONES</th>
<th>COMMENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>TREES</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AN Buckeye</td>
<td>5-8</td>
<td>tolerates shade; prefers rich moist well-drained soil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Aesculus)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N * Catclaw Acacia</td>
<td>8-10</td>
<td>thorny; tolerates heat and drought (southwestern species only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Acacia greggii)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N - Locust</td>
<td>4-9</td>
<td>thorny, fast-growing, tolerates heat, drought, soil type, neglect; suckers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Robinia)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N Mesquite</td>
<td>7-9</td>
<td>thorny; tolerates heat, drought; prefers alkaline soil (SW species)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Prosopis juliflora)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A * Mimosa, Silktree</td>
<td>7-10</td>
<td>fast-growing; short-lived; prefers alkaline soil, heat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Albizia julibrissin)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N Redbud</td>
<td>2-8</td>
<td>tolerant of soil type and amount of sun; hardiness varies among species fragrant; hardiness varies among spp.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Cercis)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AN Wild Cherry</td>
<td>3-10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Prunus)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SHRUBS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N - Blackberry, Bramble (Rubus)</td>
<td>4-8</td>
<td>needs moderate fertility and moisture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AN Blue/Huckleberry (Vaccinium)</td>
<td>4-8</td>
<td>need rich, well-drained acid soil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N E Bush Cinquefoil (Potentilla fruticosa)</td>
<td>2-8</td>
<td>tolerates drought, poor drainage, soil type, city conditions, part shade; long flowering season; care-free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A * Butterfly bush (Buddleia davidii)</td>
<td>5-9</td>
<td>dies back to roots in cold areas; prefers rich well-drained soil, sun;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
vigorous & rangy; easy from seed needs well-drained light soil, sun; drought tolerant; hardiness varies

N * Ceanothus: Buckbrush, New Jersey Tea (*Ceanothus*) 4-10

A Heath (Erica) 4-8

N Indigo bush (*Amorpha fruticosa*) 5-9

N * Labrador Tea (*Ledum groenlandicum*) 1-6

AN *- Lantana (Lantana) 8-10
grow as pot plant or annual in North; needs good drainage, tolerates heat prefers neutral rich moist soil, sun; tolerates shade, city conditions, neglect; fragrant; easy from seed tolerates drought

A E* Lilac (Syringa vulgaris) 4-7

N Madrone, Manzanita (*Arctostaphylos*) 7-9
tolerates drought

AN E Meadowsweet, Spiraea (*Spiraea*) 4-10
fast-growing; tolerant of soil type

N * Rabbitbrush (*Chrysothamnus nauseosus*) 3-9
tolerates soil type, heat, drought; prune (blooms on new growth) (W sp.)

N Coralberry, Snowberry, Wolfsberry (*Symphoricarpos*) 3-8
tolerates shade, soil type, city conditions; hard from seed; suckers

N - Sumac (*Rhus*) 4-8
drought and city tolerant; relatively short-lived; spreads by suckers
tolerates shade, poor drainage, acid soil, coastal salt; fragrant;
prefers rich wet soil

N E Sweet Pepperbush (*Clethra alnifolia*) 3-8

HERBACEOUS PERENNIALS

A Alfalfa (*Medicago sativa*) 3-9
needs well-drained soil

N Alpine Sunflower, Goldflower (*Hymenoxys*) 2-4
needs well-drained soil (western mountain species)

AN E* Aster (Aster) 3-9
requirements vary among species; most tolerate soil type, shade; most prefer well-drained soil

N * Beggar-ticks, Spanish Needles (Bidens) 5-10
adaptable; requirements and hardiness vary among species

N Birdfoot violet (*Viola pedata*) 4-9
needs well-drained soil; flowers early in spring

N E Black-eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia hirta*) 3-9
tolerates poor dry soil, heat, drought; short-lived perennial

N Blanketflower, Indian blanket (*Gaillardia*) 4-9
needs sun, well-drained soil that is not rich; tolerates heat, drought

N * Blazingstar, Gayfeather (*Liatris*) 3-9
slow to grow from seed; requirements vary with species

N Blue Flag Iris (*Iris*) 3-8
easily propagated by division of rhizome; needs moist, rich soil

N * Buckwheat (*Eriogonum*) 5-10
most varieties prefer well-drained soil; tolerate heat (mostly W spp.)

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

**VINES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
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<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Native</td>
<td>Milkvine, Climbing Milkweed</td>
<td>8-10</td>
<td>needs well-drained moist soil (southwestern species)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>Morning Glory</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>tolerates heat, poor soil, drought; self-seeding annual; plant outdoors</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
AN Passion flower  
(Passiflora)  
grow as pot plant or annual in North;  
needs moisture, part shade

N E Coreopsis  
(Coreopsis tinctoria)  
plant outdoors after frost; prefers  
light well-drained soil, tolerates  
heat, drought; self-seeds

AN Cornflower, Bachelor's buttons  
(Centaurea)  
sow outdoors early in spring; prefers  
rich/moist; tolerates dry/poor soil

A E Cosmos  
(Cosmos)  
plant outdoors after frost; tolerates  
poor dry soil; self-seeds

N Indian blanket  
(Gaillardia pulchella)  
plant outdoors after frost; prefers  
light well-drained soil; tolerates  
heat, drought

A E Marigold  
(Tagetes)  
plant outdoors after frost; prefers  
well-drained soil; tolerates drought

A E- Mustard, Winter Cress  
(Barbarea, Brassica)  
like cool weather, well-drained, moist  
soil (biennials grown as annuals)

N E Phlox  
(Phlox drummondi)  
prefers light rich moist well-drained  
soil, sun; sown out in early spring

A E Sage, Salvia  
(Salvia)  
plant outdoors after frost; prefers  
mist well-drained soil, sun;  
tolerates heat

A E Zinnia  
(Zinnia)  
plant outdoors after frost; prefers  
rich moist well-drained soil; tolerates  
heat, drought

**SOURCES OF PLANTS AND SEEDS**

Many choice butterfly plants are available from nurseries and mail-order houses. If you are unable to buy what you want, perhaps friends will let you collect a few seeds from their property. Take only the little that you need. Otherwise, watch for seeding by the plant you want along public rights-of-way. **NEVER** collect from private property, refuges, or parks without permission first! Also, please collect only seeds. Do not dig up plants because the butterflies living there need the plants too, and some wildflowers are endangered. This listing is not complete and is not an endorsement of any particular business. For a comprehensive list of sources for native species, consult *Sources of Native Seeds and Plants* by the Soil and Water Conservation Society. Call the SWCS at 1-800-843-7645 for order information.

W. Atlee Burpee & Co.  
300 Park Avenue  
Warminster, Pennsylvania 18974  
native and ornamental flowers  
seeds and plants  
catalog free

Goodwin Creek Gardens  
P.O. Box 83  
Williams, Oregon 97544  
native flowers and herbs  
seeds and plants  
catalog $1.00

Midwest Wildflowers  
P.O. Box 64  
Rockton, Illinois 61072  
native flowers  
seeds  
catalog $1.00
Park Seed Company
   Box 31
   Greenwood, South Carolina  29647
Plants of the Southwest
   1812 Second Street
   Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501
Prairie Nursery
   P.O. Box 306
   Westfield, Wisconsin  53965
Prairie Future Seed Co.
   P.O. Box 644
   Menomonee Falls, Wisconsin  53052
Stock Seed Farms, Inc.
   Route 1, Box 112
   Murdock, Nebraska  68407
Wildflowers from Nature's Way
   Box 62
   Woodburn, Iowa  50275
Wildseed Farms
   1101 Campo Rosa Road
   P.O. Box 308
   Eagle Lake, TX  77434

native and ornamental flowers
native flowers
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seeds and plants
seeds and plants
catalog free
seeds and plants
catalog $2.00
seeds and plants
catalog $2.00
seeds
catalog $2.00
seeds and plants
list for self-addressed,
stamped envelope
seeds
catalog $2.00