



# NORTH AMERICAN BUTTERFLY ASSOCIATION

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## TAMPA - ST. PETERSBURG AREA (WEST COASTAL FLORIDA)

by Pat DeSimone

### TOP BUTTERFLY NECTAR FLOWERS

A number in front of a flower name indicates order of butterfly preference (1 = most recommended). Numbers in "BLOOM SEASON" correspond to the season (S = Spring, X = Summer, F = Fall). Abbreviations: A = alien species, N = native species.

FLOWER	HEIGHT	COLOR	BLOOM SEASON	ATTRACTED BUTTERFLIES	COMMENTS
A 2 Cosmos 'Bright Lights' <i>Cosmos</i>	3-4'	yellow, orange	plant from seed all year	White Peacock, Monarch, Long-tailed Skipper, others	easy; likes dry conditions, no fertilizer
A 3 Pentas <i>Pentas lanceolata</i>	5'	red	all year	White Peacock and others	Tall ones with red flowers best; easy from cuttings
A 1 Scarlet milkweed <i>Asclepias curassavica</i>	5'	yellow, red	S-F	Monarch and others	keep ladybugs to eat aphids
A 7 Bouganvillea <i>Bougainvillea glabra</i>	vine	purple	peaks in X	Zebra, Red Admiral, Monarch, Skippers, especially Longtails	
N 4 Passionvine or maypop <i>Passiflora incarnata</i>	vine	purple	X	Zebra, Gulf Fritillary	May be grown in a pot to keep manageable, or grown on a trellis; ladybugs control mites
8 Hyacinth beans <i>Dolichos lablab</i>	vine	purple	X-F	Blues, Skippers including Long-tailed Skipper	Ladybugs will multiply on these!
5 Senna <i>Cassia mexicana</i>	5' as potted shrub	yellow	X-F	Sulphurs	easy to grow
6 Sedum <i>Sedum giganteum</i>	10-12"	green	all year	Many kinds	Grow in driest areas: do not let roots get wet!

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

Abbreviations: A = alien species, N = native species.

FLOWER	COMMENTS
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None to list.

## 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.

NAME	HEIGHT	BUTTERFLY CATERPILLARS	COMMENTS
A 3 Fennel <i>Foeniculum vulgare</i>	2'	Black Swallowtail in summer	Preferred over parsley and dill
N 2 Passionvine <i>Passiflora incarnata</i>	vine	Zebra in summer and fall, Gulf Fritillary all year	
N 1 Scarlet milkweed <i>Asclepias curassavica</i>	5'	Monarch, especially in December	Release ladybugs often to control aphids. St. Andrews cottonbug will eat aphids on milkweed so don't kill them!
4 Senna <i>Cassia</i>	5' shrub	Sulphurs, which lay eggs on in when it's in bloom	

## 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).

NAME	FLIGHT PERIOD	CATERPILLAR SEASON	CATERPILLAR FOOD PLANTS
Pipevine Swallowtail <i>Battus philenor</i>	all year	all year	pipevines
1 Black Swallowtail <i>Papilio polyxenes</i>	summer	mostly summer	fennel and other members of parsley family (carrot, dill, parsley)
Giant Swallowtail <i>Papilio cressphontes</i>	all year	all year	members of citrus family
Cloudless Sulphur <i>Phoebis sennae</i>	all year	all year	sennas ( <i>Cassia</i> )
Orange-barred Sulphur <i>Phoebis philea</i>	all year	all year	sennas ( <i>Cassia</i> )
1 Zebra <i>Heliconius charitonius</i>	all year	summer, fall	passionvines

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**COMMON BUTTERFLIES FOR YOUR GARDEN & YARD**

(continued)

NAME	FLIGHT PERIOD	CATERPILLAR SEASON	CATERPILLAR FOOD PLANTS	COMMENTS
1 Gulf Fritillary <i>Agraulis vanillae</i>	all year	all year	passion vines (but red kind not accepted)	
1 White Peacock <i>Anartia jatrophae</i>	all year	most of year	ruellias and members of snapdragon family	
1 Monarch <i>Danaus plexippus</i>	all year	all year (most in Nov.-Dec.)	milkweeds	
Queen <i>Danaus gilippus</i>	all year	all year	milkweeds, milkvines	
Long-tailed Skipper <i>Urbanus proteus</i>	all year	all year	legumes (bean family)	
Fiery Skipper <i>Hylephila phyleus</i>	all year	all year	Bermuda grass	

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

NAME	FLIGHT PERIOD	CATERPILLAR SEASON	CATERPILLAR FOOD PLANTS
Red Admiral <i>Vanessa atalanta</i>			nettles, false nettles
Common Buckeye <i>Junonia coenia</i>			plantain, snapdragons

**GENERAL COMMENTS ABOUT GARDENING IN THIS REGION**

**USDA ZONE: 9b**

Since the soil is too sandy for most nectar plants to survive, I dig large planting holes and add potting soil and peat under each and every plant. This enables the plant to form a good root system before it reaches the dry sand. All the listed nectar plants are drought tolerant and suitable for sandy soil. However, our entire garden is watered by a drip irrigation system, including the herb garden (which the butterflies love).

I also grow zinnias (large single pinks, reds, and

yellow), porterweed, ironweed, hibiscus, alyssum, and flamevine for nectar. On cold rainy days (in winter), I have fed recently hatched Monarch adults watermelon with honey.

Important note: Passionvines, milkweeds, and citrus (as well as legumes) will be attacked by aphids unless you release ladybugs on a regular basis. Remember not to spray citrus! Ladybugs purchased at garden center are cheaper than spray.

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