



# NORTH AMERICAN BUTTERFLY ASSOCIATION

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## WEST CENTRAL ILLINOIS

by David F. Hess

with assistance from Angella Moorehouse, Edwin & Evelyn Franks, and Yale Sedman

### 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.), with < meaning earlier in the month, m the middle of the month, and > late in the month. Abbreviations: A = alien species, N = native species.

FLOWER	HEIGHT	COLOR	BLOOM SEASON	ATTRACTED BUTTERFLIES	COMMENTS
A Red clover <i>Trifolium pratense</i>	6-8"	dark pink	4-11	Sulphurs	
A White clover <i>Trifolium repens</i>	3-4"	white	4-11	Eastern Tailed-Blue	
6 A Petunia <i>Petunia</i>	3-6"	various	4-11	Cloudless Sulphur	years when sulphur is common
N Redbud <i>Cercis canadensis</i>	10-25'	magenta	<5	Gossamer Wings	
A Privet <i>Ligustrum</i>	3-6'	white	5-6	Swallowtails, Great Spangled Fritillary	hedge
7 A Phlox <i>Phlox</i>	2.5-3'	magenta	5-7	Cabbage White	
A Lantana <i>Lantana</i>	1-2'	various	5-10	Eastern Tiger Swallowtail, Sulphurs	annual in our area
N Purple milkweed <i>Asclepias purpurea</i>	2'	purple	6-7	Black & Eastern Tiger Swallowtails, Great Spangled Fritillary, Red Admiral, Monarch, Silver-spotted Skipper, Grass Skippers	
N Sullivant's milkweed <i>Asclepias sullivanti</i>	1.5'	pink	6-7	same as purple milkweed	
N Butterfly weed <i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>	1'	orange	6-8	same as purple milkweed	hard to grow from seed; needs silty or sandy soil
N Common milkweed <i>Asclepias syriaca</i>	2'	magenta	6-8	same as purple milkweed	
N Hoary vervain <i>Verbena stricta</i>	2-3'	blue-	6-8	American Lady, Silver-spotted Skipper, Common Sootywing	
2 N Pale purple coneflower <i>Echinacea pallida</i>	3-4'	purple	6-8	Black, E. Tiger, and Spicebush Swallowtails; Great Spangled Fritillary, Pearl Crescent, Silver-spotted Skipper	

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WEST CENTRAL ILLINOIS

TOP BUTTERFLY NECTAR FLOWERS

(continued)

	FLOWER	HEIGHT	COLOR	BLOOM SEASON	ATTRACTED BUTTERFLIES	COMMENTS
1	N Purple coneflower <i>Echinacea purpurea</i>	3-4'	purple	6-8	same as pale purple coneflower	
5	A Butterfly bush <i>Buddleia davidii</i>	3-5'	purple	7-9	Giant & E. Tiger Swallowtails; Painted Lady, Common Buck-eye, Monarch	
	N Swamp milkweed <i>Asclepias incarnata</i>	1'	purple	7-9	same as purple milkweed	
4	A Zinnia <i>Zinnia</i>	1-2'	various	7-10	Eastern Tiger and Black Swallowtails, Sulphurs, Great Spangled Fritillary, Painted Lady, Common Buck-eye, Monarch, Silver-spotted Skipper, Fiery and Peck's Skipper	
	N Blazingstar <i>Liatris</i>	1-2'	magenta	8-9	Silver-spotted Skipper, Grass Skippers	
	N Rosinweed <i>Silphium integrifolium</i>	4-5'	yellow	8-9	Common Sootywing	
3	N New England aster <i>Aster novae-angliae</i>	3-5'	purple & orange	8-10	American & Painted Ladies, Red Admiral, Monarch	
	N Rigid goldenrod <i>Solidago rigida</i>	2'	gold	8-10	Monarch	better than N. E. Aster!

**Not flower nectar sources but sources of fruit (fallen and oozing) and sap for food:**

A	Lilac <i>Syringa</i>	5-8'	purple	5	Question Mark, Eastern Comma, Red Admiral	sap source
A	Apple <i>Malus</i>	15-30'	white	5	American Snout, Question Mark, Eastern & Gray Commas, Mourning Cloak, Red Admiral, Red-spotted Purple, Viceroy, Hackberry & Tawny Emperors, Northern Pearly-eye, Common Wood-Nymph	fruit source August-October
A	Pear <i>Pyrus</i>	10-30'	white	5	similar to apple	fruit source
N	Persimmon <i>Diospyros virginiana</i>	15-60'	yellow-green	6	similar to apple	fruit source

## WEST CENTRAL ILLINOIS

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

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

FLOWER	COMMENTS
N Gray-headed coneflower <i>Ratibida pinnata</i>	Unlike purple coneflower, butterflies rarely alight on this. This (and asters) also crowd out purple coneflowers. Only sulphurs (rarely) are on this flower.
A Lilac <i>Syringa</i>	A source of sap, but flowers on the bushes in my yard don't attract butterflies. Eastern Tiger Swallowtails and Red Admirals visit lilac flowers on bushes in other gardens.
A Snapdragon <i>Antirrhinum</i>	Butterflies are rarely on this; occasionally visited by White-lined Sphinx (a large, often day-flying moth).

### TOP CATERPILLAR FOOD PLANTS

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

NAME	HEIGHT	BUTTERFLY CATERPILLARS
N Black locust <i>Robinia pseudoacacia</i>	15-60'	Silver-spotted Skipper
A Broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower (Cruciferae)	6-18"	Cabbage White
N Common hoptree <i>Ptelea trifolia</i>	6-15'	Giant and sometimes also Eastern Tiger Swallowtails
N Common milkweed <i>Asclepias syriaca</i>	2'	Monarch
N Currants <i>Ribes</i>	2-4'	Eastern & Gray Commas
A Dill <i>Anethum graveolens</i>	2-2.5'	Black Swallowtail
N Dogwood <i>Cornus</i>	5-20'	Spring Azure
N Elm <i>Ulmus</i>	variable	Question Mark
N Golden Alexanders <i>Zizia aurea</i>	2-3'	Black Swallowtail
N Grasses (Poaceae)	variable	Fiery Skipper
N Hackberry <i>Celtis</i>	1.5-70'	American Snout, Hackberry & Tawny Emperors
N Lambs quarters <i>Chenopodium album</i>	2-3'	Common Sootywing, Hayhurst's Scallopwing
N Narrowleaf plantain <i>Plantago</i>	6"	Common Buckeye
N Native docks <i>Rumex</i>	1-2'	Coppers
N New England aster <i>Aster novae-angliae</i>	3-5'	Pearl Crescent
A Parsley <i>Petroselinum hortense</i>	3-6"	Black Swallowtail

**WEST CENTRAL ILLINOIS**

**TOP CATERPILLAR FOOD PLANTS**

(continued)

<b>NAME</b>	<b>HEIGHT</b>	<b>BUTTERFLY CATERPILLARS</b>
N Partridge pea <i>Cassia fascicularis</i>	1-3'	Cloudless Sulphur, Little Yellow
N Pawpaw <i>Asimina triloba</i>	8-20'	Zebra Swallowtail
N Pipevine <i>Aristolochia macrophylla</i>	0.5-2'	Pipevine Swallowtail
N Prickly ash <i>Zanthoxylum americana</i>	3-6'	Giant Swallowtail
N Redbud <i>Cercis canadensis</i>	10-25'	Silver-spotted Skipper
A Red clover <i>Trifolium pratense</i>	6-8"	Sulphurs
N Sassafras <i>Sassafras albidum</i>	10-40'	Spicebush Swallowtail
N Swamp milkweed <i>Asclepias incarnata</i>	1'	Monarch
N Violets <i>Viola</i>	3-6"	Variegated Fritillary
A White clover <i>Trifolium repens</i>	3-4"	Eastern Tailed-Blue
N Wild black cherry <i>Prunus serotina</i>	10-60'	Eastern Tiger Swallowtail
N Willow <i>Salix</i>	5-40'	Mourning Cloak, Viceroy

**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.), 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>
5 Black Swallowtail <i>Papilio polyxenes</i>	4-10	4-10	Dill, parsley, wild carrot, and related	On coneflowers and zinnia
2 Eastern Tiger Swallowtail <i>Papilio glaucus</i>	4-10	4-10	Wild black cherry, hoptree, tuliptree	Very common
4 Cabbage White <i>Pieris rapae</i>	3-11	3-11	Cabbage family	Abundant
Clouded Sulphur <i>Colias philodice</i>	4-12	4-11	Clover	On zinnia
3 Orange Sulphur <i>Colias eurytheme</i>	4-12	4-11	Clover, alfalfa	Most common sulphur
Cloudless Sulphur <i>Phoebis sennae</i>	6-11	6-10	Partridge pea, senna	On petunia, zinnia, trumpetvine morning glory

WEST CENTRAL ILLINOIS

COMMON BUTTERFLIES FOR YOUR GARDEN & YARD

(continued)

NAME	FLIGHT PERIOD	CATERPILLAR SEASON	CATERPILLAR FOOD PLANTS	COMMENTS
Eastern Tailed-Blue <i>Everes comyntas</i>	5-11	4-11	Legumes	Common on lawn
'Summer' Spring Azure <i>Celastrina ladon neglecta</i>	4-9	4-10	Dogwoods & others	Common passing through
7 Great Spangled Fritillary <i>Speyeria cybele</i>	6-9	5-10	Violets	On coneflowers and zinnias
8 Pearl Crescent <i>Phyciodes tharos</i>	4-11	4-11	Asters	Common
Question Mark <i>Polygonia interrogationis</i>	4-11	4-11	Elms	Likes rotten fruit
Eastern Comma <i>Polygonia comma</i>	3-11	4-11	Elms, currants, hops	Likes sap, apple orchards
Mourning Cloak <i>Nymphalis antiopa</i>	4-11	4-10	Willows, cottonwoods	Likes sap, apple orchards
Painted Lady <i>Vanessa cardui</i>	5-11	6-11	Thistles, hollyhocks	Abundant every 3-6 years
6 Red Admiral <i>Vanessa atalanta</i>	4-10	4-11	Nettles	On asters, apple fruits
Common Buckeye <i>Junonia coenia</i>	6-11	6-11	Plantains, snapdragons	Common some years
Red-spotted Purple <i>Limenitis arthemis astyanax</i>	6-9	5-10	Various shade trees	Around rotten apples
Hackberry Emperor <i>Asterocampa celtis</i>	6-9	5-10	Hackberry, elm	Around apple trees
Tawny Emperor <i>Asterocampa clyton</i>	6-9	5-10	Hackberry, elm	Around apple trees
1 Monarch <i>Danaus plexippus</i>	5-11	5-11	Milkweeds	Common to abundant
10 Silver-spotted Skipper <i>Epargyreus clarus</i>	5-9	4-9	Redbud, black locust	Most common skipper in yards
Common Checkered-Skipper <i>Pyrgus communis</i>	4-11	5-11	Hollyhocks	Rare before July-August
Common Sootywing <i>Pholisora catullus</i>	6-9	5-9	Lambs quarters	frequent in gardens
Fiery Skipper <i>Hylephila phyleus</i>	7-10	7-10	Grasses	On aster, zinnia
Peck's Skipper <i>Polites peckius</i>	5-10	5-10	Grasses	On aster, zinnia
Tawny-edged Skipper <i>Polites themistocles</i>	5-10	5-10	Grasses	On aster, zinnia, marigold
Sachem <i>Atalopedes campestris</i>	6-11	5-11	Grasses	On aster, zinnia, marigold

WEST CENTRAL ILLINOIS

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.

NAME	FLIGHT PERIOD	CATERPILLAR SEASON	CATERPILLAR FOOD PLANTS	COMMENTS
Pipevine Swallowtail <i>Battus philenor</i>	5-10	4-10	Pipevines	Seen twice in yard
Zebra Swallowtail <i>Eurytides marcellus</i>	4-8	4-9	Pawpaw	Seen once in yard
Giant Swallowtail <i>Papilio cresphontes</i>	6-9	5-9	Prickly ash	Seen once in Aug.
Spicebush Swallowtail <i>Papilio troilus</i>	5-9	4-9	Sassafras	On coneflower
Southern Dogface <i>Colias cesonia</i>	5-10	5-10	Amorpha	Seen once in yard
Little Yellow <i>Eurema lisa</i>	6-9	5-9	Partridge pea	A few times in yard
Dainty Sulphur <i>Nathalis iole</i>	4-10	6-10	Chick-,sneezeweed	A few times in yard
Bronze Copper <i>Lycaena hyllus</i>	5-10	4-10	Native docks	Once in garden
Banded Hairstreak <i>Satyrium calanus</i>	6-7	5-8	Oaks	Seen once in yard
'Oliver' Juniper Hairstreak <i>Callophrys gryneus gryneus</i>	4-7	4-8	Eastern red cedar	Three times in yard; may perch on spruce
Gray Hairstreak <i>Strymon melinus</i>	6-9	5-9	Legumes	Several times in yard
American Snout <i>Libytheana carinenta</i>	6-9	5-10	Hackberry	Around apple trees
Variegated Fritillary <i>Euptoieta claudia</i>	6-11	5-11	Violets	Occasionally on zinnias, asters
Meadow Fritillary <i>Boloria bellona</i>	4-10	4-10	Violets	Seen once in yard
Gorgone Checkerspot <i>Chlosyne gorgone</i>	5-10	4-10	Sunflowers	Seen twice in yard
Silvery Checkerspot <i>Chlosyne nycteis</i>	5-9	4-10	Sunflowers, asters	Not seen recently
American Lady <i>Vanessa virginiensis</i>	4-10	4-11	Everlastings	Occasional, on asters, vervain
Gray Comma <i>Polygonia progne</i>	6-11	5-11	Gooseberry, elms	Seen three times on apples (fruit) & sap
Viceroy <i>Limenitis archippus</i>	6-9	5-10	Poplars, willows	Seen three times around apples
Northern Pearly-eye <i>Enodia anhedon</i>	6-9	5-10	Grasses	Several times near apples and shade
Little Wood-Satyr <i>Megisto cymela</i>	5-7	4-8	Grasses	Once in yard
Common Wood-Nymph <i>Cercyonis pegala</i>	7-9	5-10	Grasses	Around apples
Hayhurst's Scallopwing <i>Staphylus hayhurstii</i>	5-9	5-9	Lambs quarters	Seen twice in yard
Juvenal's Duskywing <i>Erynnis juvenalis</i>	4-5		Oaks	Only seen 2-3 times in yard
Least Skipper <i>Ancyloxypha numitor</i>	6-9	5-9	Grasses	On Mexican heather
Delaware Skipper <i>Anatrytone logan</i>	6-9	5-9	Grasses	Once in garden
Crossline Skipper <i>Polites origenes</i>	5-8	5-8	Grasses	Once in yard

## WEST CENTRAL ILLINOIS

### GENERAL COMMENTS AI

#### USDA ZONE: 5

Fertile clay and silt loams occur in most of the area, with poor drainage (tiling needed). Sandy soils occur in Mason and Cass and western Henderson Counties. The topography is mostly level, with dissected areas and ravine tributaries to river valleys. Summers are fairly hot (Upper Austral), with the average July temperature 75-79°F. Winters vary from intensely cold (upper Michigan type) to moderate (average Kentucky type). About every 10-15 years a Texas-type summer occurs with average July temperatures of 82-83°F (94°F average daily high and 72°F average daily low). Spring weather is very variable. Hot spells can occur in April (85-90°F) and frosts as late as late May.

Some plants such as flowering dogwood and azaleas must be started as older plants because they may not survive winds or winter cold and dryness as younger plants. This area is at the northern edge of the regular range of trees such as persimmon, sassafras, and pawpaw. Some outposts occur farther north in river valleys or near Great Lakes. In addition to fruit and sap, the compost heap (rotten fruit, peels, weeds) can supply food for adult butterflies (Question Mark, Eastern Comma, Mourning Cloak, Red Admiral, Red-spotted Purple).

The butterfly lists are generally for the central part of this area (McDonough County). To the south, as in Cass, Scott, and Green Counties, there would be more Zebra and Spicebush Swallowtails. Home gardens along the Illinois River Valley could get rarities from the bluffs such as Henry's Elfin, Falcate Orangetip, and Sleepy Orange. Orchards might attract Goatweed Emperors. To the north in Mercer County, there might occasionally be northerly species such as Aphrodite Fritillary and maybe Milbert's Tortoiseshell.

These are the important components of a butterfly yard: shade trees and fruit trees to attract satyrs and anglewings, native and cultivated nectar flowers, a bird bath or small pool/stream, and caterpillar food plants.

