

BUTTERFLY GARDENING

HUMBER NURSERIES 'GREEN THUMB GUIDE'



An abundance of flowers of almost any kind is certain to attract butterflies to your garden, although they pay scant attention to double, multi-petaled forms (such as most Roses, Peonies and Dahlia). These do not provide an accessible source of nectar, which is their prime interest. They will more readily visit open flowers that provide a landing platform such as Lilies, Coneflowers and Black-Eyed Susans.

Even more appealing are flower heads that are composed of clusters of individual flowers such as Bee Balm (*Monarda*). Amongst the weeds and wildflowers that butterflies find naturally desirable are Thistles (*Echinops*), Asters and other members of the *Asteraceae* family. The abundant nectar source in flowers such as these is an aid to the butterfly watcher as the insect is more likely to remain on the same flower for a considerable time rather than flit about. Good ornamental varieties of these are the many Yarrow (*Achillea*), Knapweeds (*Centaurea*) and Ornamental Thistle (*Centaurea* and *Cirsium*).



The increased use of perennials in our gardens benefits the butterfly population. Early-flowering perennials provide a nectar source long before the safe planting-out date of summer annuals. Spring flowering Violets (*Viola*) are important butterfly plants. In the fall, Michaelmas Daisies (*Aster*), Goldenrod (*Solidago*), and Ironweed (*Vernonia*) provide an essential nectar source late in the season.

Two very well known butterfly plants are Butterfly Bush (*Buddleja*) and Butterfly Weed (*Asclepias*). Butterfly Bush is available in many strong colours including yellow, blue, pink, red and white. Quite contrary to normal expectations, it is the white flowered forms that are favoured by butterflies. Shy or skittish butterflies that would normally flee at your approach will ignore your presence entirely to feast on the *Buddleja* flowers. Technically a woody shrub, Butterfly Bush is treated like a perennial and can be included in the perennial border. It flowers in late summer on new growth and should be cut down to a few inches after flowering or in spring.

Butterfly Weed (*Asclepias tuberosa*) is a North American native with bright orange flowers and essential to the migrating Monarch Butterfly. Swamp Milkweed (*Asclepias incarnata*) can be red or white flowered but more usually pink with a butterfly-attracting vanilla scent. Common Milkweed (*Asclepias syriaca*) has honey-scented pink to purple flowers. The fruit pod splits open to release silky plumed seeds.

In our Butterfly listing a number are marked RARE IN ONTARIO. Sleepy Orange is an example but its scarcity is understood since it rarely finds its favourite (Wild Senna) in our gardens. The Spicebush Swallowtail depends on the Spicebush (*Lindera benzoin*). When we grow the right plants many of these butterflies will become more common in the future.

WHY DO BUTTERFLIES JUST FLUTTER BY?

Why would butterflies ignore the nectar-laden feast that you have grown just to entice them to your garden? Charles Darwin put his mighty brain to work on this question and reasoned that butterflies had to learn just how to stand on any particular flower and just how far its tongue had to reach for its nectar reward. Once having learned this it was reluctant to have to learn a different posture for another plant. A butterfly in its short life span may be forced to learn various plants as each variety comes into flower and others cease flowering, but as long as its 'learned' plant is available, that flower will be preferred. This is called Flower Consistency (it is even more pronounced in bees). So it seems that to keep butterflies happy and to keep them in your garden, we should grow lots and lots of similarly shaped flowers.

Swallow Tail



Painted Lady



BUTTERFLIES FAVOURITE PLANTS

PERENNIALS

Yarrow	<i>Achillea var.</i>	Yellow, white, pink, red, lilac	Purple Coneflower	<i>Echinacea</i>	Pink, white
Chives	<i>Allium</i>	Mauve, white	Globe Thistle	<i>Echinops</i>	Blue, silver
Rock Cross	<i>Arabis</i>	White, pink, purple	Blanket Flower	<i>Gaillardia</i>	Red, orange, yellow
Butterfly Weed	<i>Asclepias</i>	Orange, pink	Sunflower	<i>Helianthus</i>	Yellow
Michaelmas Daisy	<i>Aster</i>	Blue, purple, red, pink, white	Daylily	<i>Hemerocallis</i>	Many colours
Astilbe	<i>Astilbe</i>	Pink, red, white	Candy Tuft	<i>Iberis</i>	White, pink
Knapweed	<i>Centaurea</i>	Yellow, purple	Lavender	<i>Lavendula</i>	Lavender, purple
Valerian	<i>Centranthus</i>	Red, pink, white	Phlox	<i>Phlox</i>	Many colours
Wallflower	<i>Cheiranthus</i>	Yellow, orange, red, purple	Primrose	<i>Primula</i>	Many colours
Chrysanthemum	<i>Chrysanthemum</i>	Yellow, orange pink, white	Primrose	<i>Primula vialli</i>	Orchid pink
Turtlehead	<i>Chelone</i>	White, pink	Black-eyed Susan	<i>Rudbeckia</i>	Yellow
Thistle	<i>Cirsium</i>	Pink	Pincushion Flower	<i>Scabiosa</i>	Blue, pink, white
Coreopsis	<i>Coreopsis</i>	Yellow, pink	Showy Stonecrop	<i>Sedum</i>	Red, pink, white
Pinks	<i>Dianthus</i>	Pink, red, white	Goldenrod	<i>Solidago</i>	Yellow, white
			Verbena	<i>Verbena</i>	Pink, purple
			Ironweed	<i>Vernonia</i>	Purple, pink

ANNUALS

Ageratum	<i>Ageratum</i>	Blue, white, pink	Lobelia	<i>Lobelia</i>	Blue, purple, white
Bachelor's Button	<i>Centaurea</i>	Blue, pink, red, white	Sweet Alyssum	<i>Lobularia</i>	White, pink, purple
Cosmos	<i>Cosmos</i>	White, pink, purple	Petunia	<i>Petunia</i>	Many colours
Pinks	<i>Dianthus</i>	Many colours	Phlox	<i>Phlox</i>	Many colours
Sweet William	<i>Dianthus</i>	Many colours	Gloriosa Daisy	<i>Rudbeckia</i>	Yellow, orange, red
Candy Tuft	<i>Iberis</i>	Pink, purple, red, white	Marigold	<i>Tagetes</i>	Yellow, orange, red
Impatiens	<i>Impatiens</i>	Many colours	Verbena	<i>Verbena</i>	Many colours
Lantana	<i>Lantana</i>	Orange, yellow	Zinnia	<i>Zinnia</i>	Many colours

TREES, SHRUBS and VINES

Butterfly Bush	<i>Buddleia</i>	Blue, purple, white	Azalea	<i>Azalea</i>	Many colours
Button Bush	<i>Cephalanthus</i>	White	Rhododendron	<i>Rhododendron</i>	Many colours
Spice Bush	<i>Lindera benzoin</i>	Green/Yellow and red fruit	Lilac	<i>Syringa</i>	Purple, pink, white
Honeysuckle	<i>Lonicera</i>	Yellow, red, white	Viburnum	<i>Viburnum</i>	Pink, white
			Wisteria	<i>Wisteria</i>	Blue, white

BUTTERFLY GARDENING WITH HERBS

Parsley, Sage, Rosemary and Mint are only a few of the better-known herbs that are appealing to butterflies. A herb garden, summer planters, or herbs combined with perennials are all enticements to our colourful insect friends.

The flowers are a source of nectar and at other times are favoured as host plants for butterfly eggs. The spicy, minty or citrus-flavoured foliage of many herbs is a welcoming signal to butterflies.

Monarch Butterflies were thought to use only varieties of Butterfly Weed (*Asclepias*) as a larval host. It is known that they will lay eggs on the pungent leaves of Rue (*Ruta graveolens*). Monarchs lay their eggs singly so little damage results to the plant. The vast majority of caterpillar pests are those of moths.

Fennel (*Foeniculum*) is a favourite of the Black Swallowtail in addition to Caraway, Parsley and Dill. You can keep your butterflies happy and in your garden with Chives, Garlic Chives and other onions.

The very large family of Sage are an important group of butterfly plants and includes hardy perennials, long-flowering annuals and herbal varieties. The richer the larder you provide, the richer your garden will be in butterflies.



BUTTERFLIES IN ONTARIO

FAMILY PAPILIONIDAE – TRUE SWALLOWTAILS

PIPE VINE SWALLOWTAIL - *Papilio philenor* (*Blattus p.*) Mostly black with a bluish iridescence on the hind wings.

Larval Host: Dutchman's Pipe (*Aristolochia*), Knotweed (*Polygonum*) Wild Ginger (*Asarum*)

Nectar Plant: Butterfly Bush (*Buddleia*), Petunia (*Petunia*), Lilac (*Syringa*), Azalea (*Rhododendron*)

BLACK SWALLOWTAIL - *Papilio polyxenes* Mostly black with a band of yellow spots.

Larval Host: Carrot and Queen Anne's Lace, Caraway, Parsley, Celery, Dill and Fennel.

Nectar Plants: Butterfly Weed (*Asclepias*), Phlox, Clover (*Trifolium*), Thistle (*Cirsium*)

GIANT SWALLOWTAIL - *Papilio cresphontes* Black above with yellow patches. More yellow below with black veins and margins. Large up to 15cm.

Larval Host: Citrus fruit particularly oranges as it is mainly a southern species that ventures into this area. In the north it will accept Citrus-scented plants such as Gas Plant (*Dictamnus*).

Nectar Plants: Honeysuckle (*Lonicera*), Azalea (*Rhododendron*), Goldenrod (*Solidago*)

EUROPEAN CABBAGE WHITE - *Pieris rapae* Mostly white, the male has one black spot on the forewings, the female two.

Larval Host: Cabbage, Broccoli, Brussels Sprouts, Radish and Nasturtium.

Nectar Plant: Lantana, Impatiens, Marigold (*Tagetes*), Dandelion (*Taraxacum*)

TIGER SWALLOWTAIL - *Papilio glaucus* Mostly yellow with black bands and margins. The hind wings have blue patches and orange spots.

Larval Host: A high flyer, the female selects tall trees and shrubs as hostplants, Wild Cherry (*Prunus*), Willow (*Salix*), Cottonwood (*Populus*) and Tulip Tree (*Liriodendron*).

Nectar Plant: Butterfly Bush (*Buddleia*), Lilac (*Syringa*), Honeysuckle (*Lonicera*), Butterfly Weed (*Asclepias*), Marigold (*Tagetes*)

SPICEBUSH SWALLOWTAIL - *Papilio troilus* Mostly black with patches of metallic blue on the hind wings and orange spots.

Larval Host: Spicebush (*Lindera benzoin*), Sassafras (*Sassafras albidum*)

Nectar Plant: Honeysuckle (*Lonicera*), Lantana (*Lantana*), Azalea (*Rhododendron*), Butterfly Weed (*Asclepias*)

FAMILY PIERIDAE – WHITES and SULPHURS

CHECKERED WHITE - *Pontia protodice* Mostly white with black patches.

Larval Host: Mustard, Cabbage, Turnip and other Cruciferae also Spider Plant (*Cleome*).

Nectar Plant: Michaelmas Daisy (*Aster*), Butterfly Weed (*Asclepias*), Centaury (*Centaureium*)

VEINED WHITE – *Pieris nappi* Mostly white. Light mustard to white below.

Larval Food: Mustard family, Cabbage, Broccoli, etc. also Nasturtiums

Nectar Food: Most flowering plants including Lantana, Impatiens, Mint and Dandelions

EUROPEAN CABBAGE WHITE – *Pieris rapae* Mostly white. The male has one black spot on the forewings, the female has two.

Larval Food: Cabbage, Broccoli, Brussel Sprouts, Radish and Nasturtium.

Nectar Food: Lantana, Impatiens, Marigold (*Tagetes*), Dandelions (*Taraxacum*)

CLOUDED SULPHUR - *Colias philodece* Mostly yellow with black margins and a black spot on the forewing.

Larval Host: Various members of the Pea family (*Leguminosae*) especially Clover (*Trifolium*) and Lupins.

Nectar Plant: Michaelmas Daisy (*Aster*), Goldenrod (*Solidago*), Phlox (Phlox), Clover (*Trifolium*)

ORANGE SULPHUR – *Colias eurytheme* Yellowish orange. The female has a black spot on each forewing. Blackish borders.

Larval Host: Alfalfa, Vetches, Clover

Nectar Plant: Asters, Goldenrod, Phlox and Clover

CLOUDLESS SULPHUR - *Phoebis sennae* Males are yellow, females yellow, yellow-orange or whitish.

Larval Host: Species of Senna (*Cassia*), Cassia marylandica - Wild Senna can be grown in Southern Ontario, also Clover (*Trifolium*).

Nectar Plant: Lantana (*Lantana*), Bougainvillea, Hibiscus (*Hibiscus*), Mallow (*Malva*), Morning Glory (*Ipomoea*)

SLEEPY ORANGE - *Eurema nicippe* Rich orange above with black markings. Mainly yellow below.

Larval Host: Almost exclusively on Wild Senna (*Cassia*)

Nectar Plant: Composites, in particular Beggar Ticks (*Bidens*)

FAMILY LYCAENEDAE - COPPERS

SMALL COPPER - *Lycaena phlaeaus* Bright copper above with gray-black margins. Mostly gray below with an orange band.

Larval Host: Sheep Sorrel (*Rumex acetosella*), Curled Dock (*Rumex crispus*)

Nectar Plant: Butterfly Weed (*Asclepias*), Goldenrod (*Solidago*), Yarrow (*Achillea*), Buttercup (*Ranunculus*)

BRONZE COPPER – *Lycaena hyllus* Bronze with orange band on the hindwing.

Larval Host: Dock (*Rumex*)

Nectar Plant: Most flowering plants

GRAY HAIRSTREAK - *Strymon melinus* Dark gray above and light gray below with orange spots on the hind wings.

Larval Host: The larvae feed on a wide variety of plants, including Hibiscus (*Hibiscus*), Clover (*Trifolium*), Mallow (*Malva*), Beans (*Phaseolus*), Vetch (*Vicia*)

Nectar Plant: Goldenrod (*Solidago*), Milkweed (*Asclepias*), Clover (*Trifolium*), Winter Cress (*Barbarea*)

SPRING AZURE - *Celastina ladon* Metallic blue above and gray below but quite variable in various habitats.

Larval Host: Dogwood (*Cornus*), Viburnum, New Jersey Tea (*Ceanothus*), Blueberry (*Vaccinium*)

Nectar Plant: Rockcress (*Arabis*), Buckeye (*Aesculus*), Violet (*Viola*), Winter Cress (*Barbarea*), Dandelion (*Taraxacum*)

FAMILY NYMPHALIDAE - BRUSHFOOTS

VARIEGATED FRITILLARY - *Euptoieta claudia* Dark orange with many black lines.

Larval Host: Violet (*Viola*), Passion Vine (*Passiflora*), Stonecrop (*Sedum*)

Nectar Plant: Butterfly Weed (*Asclepias*), Clover (*Trifolium*), Beggar's Tick (*Bidens*)

GREAT SPANGLED FRITILLARY - *Speyeria cybele* Mostly orange above with silver patches.

Larval Host: Very fond of Violets (*Viola*)

Nectar Plant: Gloriosa Daisy (*Rudbeckia hirta*), Thistle (*Cirsium*), Verbena (*Verbena*), Butterfly Weed (*Asclepias*)

HARRIS CHECKERSPOT – *Chlosyne harrisii* Checkered black and orange.

Larval Host: Asters

Nectar Plant: Most flowering plants

PEARL CRESCENT - *Phyciodes tharos* Orange with many black patches and black margins.

Larval Host: Michaelmas Daisy (*Aster*)

Nectar Plant: Thistle (*Cirsium*), Aster, Gloriosa Daisy (*Rudbeckia*)

BALTIMORE – *Euphydryas phaeton* Black with orange and white checks

Larval Host: Turtlehead, Plantain

Nectar Plant: Daisy, Asters

QUESTION MARK – *Polygonia interrogationis* Orange with black marks and short tails.

Larval Host: Elm, Hops, Hackberry

Nectar Plant: Rarely seeks nectar, prefers tree sap and rotting fruit.

COMMA – *Polygonia comma* Orange with black spotting and black borders.

Larval Host: Hops and Nettles

Nectar Plant: Rarely seeks nectar, prefers tree sap and rotting fruit.

COMPTON TORTOISESHELL – *Nymphalis vau-album*

Black and orange with a white spot on each wing.

Larval Host: Aspen, Birch and Willow**Nectar Plant:** Most flowering plants.**MOURNING CLOAK** – *Nymphalis antiopa*Deep maroon with a marginal row of violet blue marks and yellow borders.
Gray below.**Larval Host:** Willow, Elm and Poplar**Nectar Plant:** Rarely seeks nectar, prefers tree sap and rotting fruit.**MILBERT'S TORTOISESHELL** – *Nymphalis milberti*

Dark brown with orange and yellow bands.

Larval Host: Nettles**Nectar Plant:** Most flowering plants, tree sap and rotting fruit.**RED ADMIRAL** – *Vanessa atalanta*

Black with white spots. An orange-red border on the hind wing and orange-red bar across the middle of the forewing.

Larval Host: Nettles**Nectar Plant:** Most flowering plants, tree sap and rotting fruit.**AMERICAN PAINTED LADY** - *Vanessa virginiensis*

Orange above with black and white wing tips and blue spots on the hind wings. Varied patterned beneath with two large eyespots on the hind wings.

Larval Host: Pearly Everlasting (*Anaphalis*), Pussy Toes (*Antennaria*)**Nectar Plant:** Marigold (*Tagetes*), Goldenrod (*Solidago*), Aster, Butterfly Bush (*Buddleia*)**COSMOPOLITAN (Common) PAINTED LADY** - *Vanessa cardui*

Not a permanent resident but migrates north from Mexico. Mostly orange above with black and white wing tips and black spots on the hind wings.

Larval Host: Variety of plants but particularly on Thistle (*Cirsium*) also on Mallow (*Malva*) and Hollyhock (*Alcea*).**Nectar Plant:** Aster (*Aster*), Cosmos (*Cosmos*), Thistle (*Cirsium*), Buttonbush (*Cephalanthus*)**BUCKEYE** - *Junonia coenia*

Mostly brown above with an eyespot on each forewing and two on each hindwing.

Larval Host: Plantain (*Plantago*), Snapdragon (*Antirrhinum*), Toadflax (*Linaria*)**Nectar Plant:** Aster, Coreopsis (*Coreopsis*), Knapweed (*Centaurea*), Chicory (*Chichorium*)**WHITE ADMIRAL** - *Limenitis arthemis arthemis*

Black with a white band through both wings.

Larval Host: Birch, Willow and Poplar**Nectar Plant:** Most flowering plants, tree sap and rotting fruit.**RED-SPOTTED PURPLE** – *Limenitis arthemis astyandy*

Black with iridescent blue-white spots on the wing tips. Below is brownish with brick-red marks.

Larval Host: Willow, Poplar and Wild Cherry**Nectar Plant:** Most flowering plants, tree sap and rotting fruit.**VICEROY** – *Limenitis archippus*

Mimics the colour of the Monarch butterfly with an added black line across the hind wings. Orange with white-spotted black wing borders and black veining.

Larval Host: Willow, Poplar**Nectar Plant:** Most flowering plants, tree sap and rotting fruit.**MONARCH** - *Danaus plexippus*

Perhaps the best known of butterflies. Orange with black veins and borders.

Larval Host: Milkweed (*Asclepias*), Butterfly Weed (*Asclepius*)**Nectar Plant:** All species of *Asclepias*, Lantana (*Lantana*), Lilac (*Syringa*), Cosmos (*Cosmos*), Goldenrod (*Solidago*), Zinnia (*Zinnia*)**FAMILY HESPERIIDAE – THE SKIPPERS****SILVER-SPOTTED SKIPPER** - *Epargyreus clarus*

Mostly brown with a distinctive silver patch on the hind wing.

Larval Host: The larvae feed primarily on Locust (*Robinia*) but also on Legumes.**Nectar Plant:** Zinnia (*Zinnia*), Honeysuckle (*Lonicera*), Butterfly Weed (*Asclepias*), Joe-Pye Weed (*Eupatorium*)**CHECKERED SKIPPER** - *Pyrgus communis*

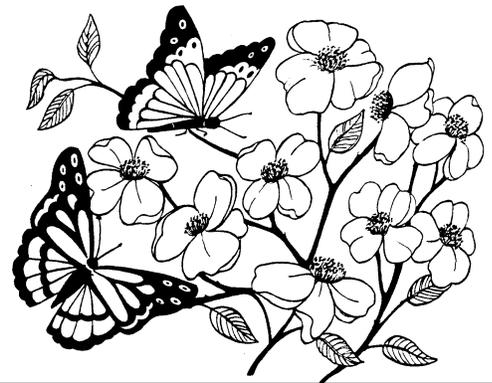
Checkered black and white.

Larval Host: Favours the Mallow family, Mallow (*Malva*), Hibiscus Hollyhock (*Alcea*), Checkerbloom (*Sidalcea*)**Nectar Plant:** Aster, (Fleabane (*Erigeron*), Knapweed (*Centaurea*), Beggar's Tick (*Bidens*)**FIERY SKIPPER** - *Hylephila phyleua*

Orange-yellow with brown patches. Orange-yellow below with numerous small brown spots.

Larval Host: Grasses including Crabgrass.**Nectar Plant:** Stature (*Limonium*), Aster, Lantana (*Lantana*), Marigold (*Tagetes*), Ironweed (*Vernonia*)**SACHEM** - *Atalopedes campestris*

Brownish-orange. The males have a large black patch on the forewing.

Larval Host: Many grasses including Crabgrass.**Nectar Plant:** Marigold (*Tagetes*), Aster (*Aster*), Butterfly Weed (*Asclepias*), Buttonbush (*Cephalanthus*)As a larval food the Skippers also use various grasses, Bluegrass (*Poa*) and Panic Grasses (*Panicum*).

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**GREEN IS NOT JUST A COLOUR.....
IT'S OUR FUTURE.**

