

Butterfly Gardens

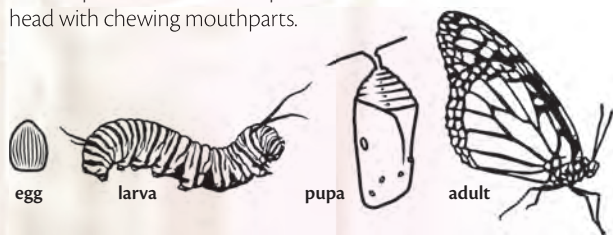
Observing butterflies can be a rewarding activity. While you can seek them in the wild, you can also bring them to your home or schoolyard by planting a butterfly garden. A complete butterfly garden contains food plants for the adults and larvae. Adults feed on the nectar of a variety of flowers, while larvae are more specific about the plants that they will eat.

The butterfly garden should be planted in a sunny area. A few flat stones or boards placed in and around your garden will provide resting locations for adult butterflies. Mud puddles can be added to provide moisture sources. You can make a mud puddle by digging a hole big enough to allow you to insert a small plastic container. Fill the container with a sand and soil mixture and add water. You can also leave natural depressions in the soil that will fill with rain.



Anatomy and Life History

Lepidopterans, the insect group containing butterflies, have three main body parts (head, thorax, abdomen), three pairs of legs and a pair of antennae. Most have two pairs of wings, and the wings are covered with tiny scales. The mouthparts of adult butterflies are modified into a tube-like proboscis for taking in liquids. The proboscis is coiled at the front of the head when not in use. The antennae have a knob at the tip. The larva, or caterpillar, is soft-bodied. It has a hardened head with chewing mouthparts.



Butterflies undergo a complete metamorphosis with four distinct stages: egg, larva, pupa, adult. Eggs are laid singly or in clusters on or near the host plant. The egg hatches into the larval form that feeds, grows and molts several times before transforming into a pupa. After a period of time, the winged adult emerges.

Conservation

Surveys indicate that the populations of some butterflies have declined in Illinois, especially those associated with prairies and wetlands. The primary cause for the reduction is loss of habitat from urbanization, industrialization and widespread use of pesticides. Incorporating a butterfly garden into your schoolyard or landscaping can help to increase available habitat for butterflies in Illinois. Care should be taken when any pesticides are used near your butterfly garden.

Native Host Plants for Common Butterfly Larvae

Butterfly common name, <i>scientific name</i>	Larval Food Plants common name, <i>scientific name</i>
American copper, <i>Lycaena phlaeas americana</i>	docks, <i>Rumex</i> spp.
American painted lady, <i>Vanessa virginiensis</i>	asters, <i>Aster</i> spp. pussy-toes, <i>Antennaria</i> spp.
black swallowtail, <i>Papilio polyxenes asterius</i>	golden Alexanders, <i>Zizia aurea</i> water parsnip, <i>Sium suave</i> water hemlock, <i>Cicuta maculata</i>
buckeye, <i>Junonia coenia</i>	plantains, <i>Plantago</i> spp. false foxgloves, <i>Agalinis</i> spp.
cloudless sulphur, <i>Phoebis sennae eubule</i>	Maryland senna, <i>Senna marilandica</i>
eastern tailed-blue, <i>Everes comyntas</i>	legumes (milk vetches, <i>Astragalus</i> spp., bush clovers, <i>Lespedeza</i> spp., etc.)
fiery skipper, <i>Hylephila phyleus</i>	grasses, sedges
giant swallowtail, <i>Papilio cresphontes</i>	wafer ash, <i>Ptelea trifoliata</i> prickly ash, <i>Zanthoxylum americanum</i>
great spangled fritillary, <i>Speyeria cybele</i>	violets, <i>Viola</i> spp.
hackberry butterfly, <i>Asterocampa celtis</i>	hackberries, <i>Celtis</i> spp.
little yellow, <i>Eurema lisa</i>	partridge pea, <i>Chamaecrista fasciculata</i>
monarch, <i>Danaus plexippus</i>	milkweeds, butterfly-weeds, <i>Asclepias</i> spp.

Butterfly common name, <i>scientific name</i>	Larval Food Plants common name, <i>scientific name</i>
pearl crescent, <i>Phyciodes tharos</i>	asters, <i>Aster</i> spp.
question mark, <i>Polygonia interrogationis</i>	elms, <i>Ulmus</i> spp. hackberries, <i>Celtis</i> spp.
red admiral, <i>Vanessa atalanta</i>	nettles, <i>Urtica</i> spp. pussy-toes, <i>Antennaria</i> spp.
silver-spotted skipper, <i>Epargyreus clarus</i>	false indigo, <i>Amorpha fruticosa</i> honey locust, <i>Gleditsia triacanthos</i> Maryland senna, <i>Senna marilandica</i>
spicebush swallowtail, <i>Papilio troilus</i>	sassafras, <i>Sassafras albidum</i> spicebush, <i>Lindera benzoin</i>
spring/summer azure, <i>Celastrina ladon</i> (spring), <i>Celastrina neglecta</i> (summer)	dogwoods, <i>Cornus</i> spp.
tiger swallowtail, <i>Papilio glaucus</i>	apples, <i>Malus</i> spp. ashes, <i>Fraxinus</i> spp. birches, <i>Alnus</i> spp., <i>Betula</i> spp. poplars, <i>Populus</i> spp. tulip tree, <i>Liriodendron tulipifera</i> wild black cherry, <i>Prunus serotina</i>
viceroys, <i>Limenitis archippus</i>	cherries, <i>Prunus</i> spp. plums, <i>Prunus</i> spp. willows, <i>Salix</i> spp.
wild indigo dusky wing, <i>Erynnis baptisiae</i>	wild indigos, <i>Baptisia</i> spp.
zebra swallowtail, <i>Eurytides marcellus</i>	pawpaw, <i>Asimina triloba</i>

Native Plants for Common Adult Butterflies

nectar sources and shelter/resting

Native Wildflowers and Grasses

common name	scientific name
asters	<i>Aster spp.</i>
blazing-stars	<i>Liatris spp.</i>
black-eyed Susan	<i>Rudbeckia hirta</i>
bonesets	<i>Eupatorium spp.</i>
butterfly-weed	<i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>
cardinal-flower	<i>Lobelia cardinalis</i>
coneflowers	<i>Echinacea spp.</i>
dogbanes	<i>Apocynum spp.</i>
goldenrods	<i>Solidago spp.</i>
Hill's thistle	<i>Cirsium hillii</i>
ironweeds	<i>Vernonia spp.</i>
Joe-pye-weeds	<i>Eupatoriadelphus spp.</i>
little bluestem	<i>Schizachyrium scoparium</i>
milkweeds	<i>Asclepias spp.</i>
mountain mints	<i>Pycnanthemum spp.</i>
New England aster	<i>Aster novae-angliae</i>
phloxes	<i>Phlox spp.</i>
prairie clovers	<i>Dalea spp.</i>
prairie dropseed	<i>Sporobolus heterolepis</i>
rosinweed	<i>Silphium integrifolium</i>
side-oats grama	<i>Bouteloua curtipendula</i>
swamp thistle	<i>Cirsium muticum</i>
tickseeds	<i>Coreopsis spp.</i>
vervains	<i>Verbena spp.</i>
wild bergamot	<i>Monarda fistulosa</i>

Shrubs and Trees

common name	scientific name
buckeyes	<i>Aesculus spp.</i>
cherries	<i>Prunus spp.</i>
dogwoods	<i>Cornus spp.</i>
hawthorns	<i>Crataegus spp.</i>
New Jersey tea	<i>Ceanothus americanus</i>
plums	<i>Prunus spp.</i>
privets	<i>Ligustrum spp.</i>
redbud	<i>Cercis canadensis</i>
spicebush	<i>Lindera benzoin</i>
spiraeas	<i>Spiraea spp.</i>
sumacs	<i>Rhus spp.</i>

All of the native plants listed on this brochure may not be available from a single source.

You may need to visit a variety of vendors who sell native plants in order to obtain a diversity of species for your garden.



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Natural Heritage Division
One Natural Resources Way
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