

# 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.



tiger swallowtail



meadow fritillary, *Boloria bellona*



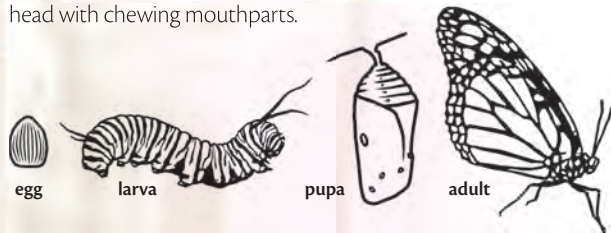
zebra swallowtail



bronze copper, *Lycaena hylus*

## 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 spp.</i>
American painted lady, <i>Vanessa virginiensis</i>	asters, <i>Aster spp.</i> pussy-toes, <i>Antennaria spp.</i>
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 spp.</i> false foxgloves, <i>Agalinis spp.</i>
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 spp.</i> , bush clovers, <i>Lespedeza spp.</i> , 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 ameri-</i> <i>canum</i>
great spangled fritillary, <i>Speyeria cybele</i>	violets, <i>Viola spp.</i>
hackberry butterfly, <i>Asterocampa celtis</i>	hackberries, <i>Celtis spp.</i>
little yellow, <i>Eurema lisa</i>	partridge pea, <i>Chamaecrista fasciculata</i>
monarch, <i>Danaus plexippus</i>	milkweeds, butterfly-weeds, <i>Asclepias spp.</i>

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 spp.</i>
question mark, <i>Polygonia interrogationis</i>	elms, <i>Ulmus spp.</i> hackberries, <i>Celtis spp.</i>
red admiral, <i>Vanessa atalanta</i>	nettles, <i>Urtica spp.</i> pussy-toes, <i>Antennaria spp.</i>
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 spp.</i>
tiger swallowtail, <i>Papilio glaucus</i>	apples, <i>Malus spp.</i> ashes, <i>Fraxinus spp.</i> birches, <i>Alnus spp.</i> , <i>Betula spp.</i> poplars, <i>Populus spp.</i> tulip tree, <i>Liriodendron tulipifera</i> wild black cherry, <i>Prunus serotina</i>
viceroy, <i>Limenitis archippus</i>	cherries, <i>Prunus spp.</i> plums, <i>Prunus spp.</i> willows, <i>Salix spp.</i>
wild indigo dusky wing, <i>Erynnis baptisiae</i>	wild indigos, <i>Baptisia spp.</i>
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</i> spp.
blazing-stars	<i>Liatris</i> spp.
black-eyed Susan	<i>Rudbeckia hirta</i>
bonesets	<i>Eupatorium</i> spp.
butterfly-weed	<i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>
cardinal-flower	<i>Lobelia cardinalis</i>
coneflowers	<i>Echinacea</i> spp.
dogbanes	<i>Apocynum</i> spp.
goldenrods	<i>Solidago</i> spp.
Hill's thistle	<i>Cirsium hillii</i>
ironweeds	<i>Vernonia</i> spp.
Joe-pye-weeds	<i>Eupatoriadelphus</i> spp.
little bluestem	<i>Schizachyrium scoparium</i>
milkweeds	<i>Asclepias</i> spp.
mountain mints	<i>Pycnanthemum</i> spp.
New England aster	<i>Aster novae-angliae</i>
phloxes	<i>Phlox</i> spp.
prairie clovers	<i>Dalea</i> spp.
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</i> spp.
vervains	<i>Verbena</i> spp.
wild bergamot	<i>Monarda fistulosa</i>

### Shrubs and Trees

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

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.



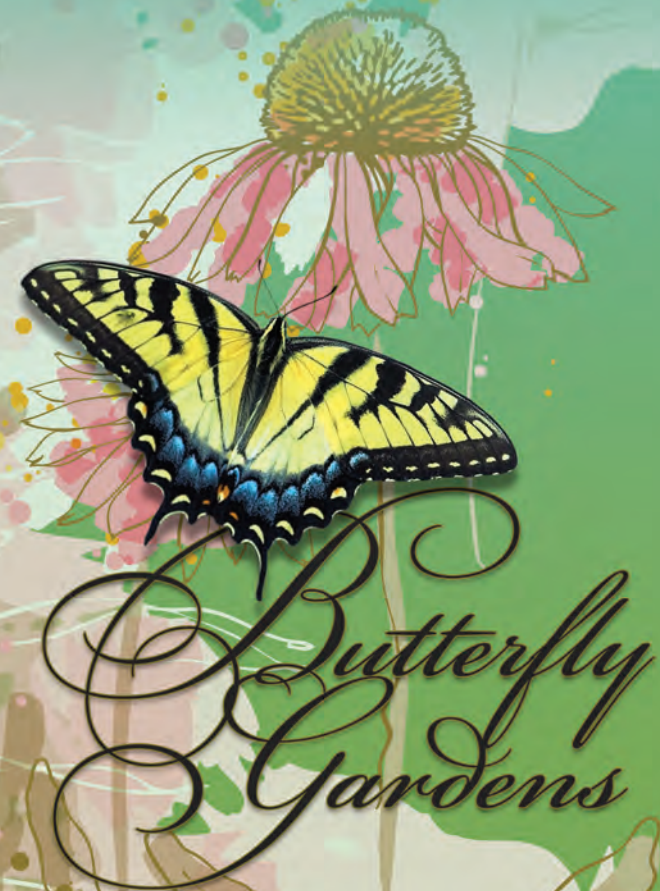
Photographs © David Brewer and © Carolyn Fields

Equal opportunity to participate in programs of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) and those funded by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and other agencies is available to all individuals regardless of race, sex, national origin, disability, age, religion or other non-merit factors. If you believe you have been discriminated against, contact the funding source's civil rights office and/or the Equal Employment Opportunity Officer, IDNR, One Natural Resources Way, Springfield, IL 62702-1271; 217/785-0067; TTY 217/782-9175. This information may be provided in an alternative format if required. Contact the DNR Clearinghouse at 217/782-7498 for assistance.

Printed by the Authority of the State of Illinois  
DNR232 12/12 • IOCI 13-0379



State of Illinois  
Illinois Department of Natural Resources



Natural Heritage Division  
One Natural Resources Way  
Springfield, IL 62702-1271