

10 Steps to a Better Butterfly Garden

READ. Get a good butterfly identification book, such as Gardening for Butterflies by the Xerces Society and The Life Cycle of Butterflies by Judy Burris and Wayne Richards.

Feed 'EM. Add nectar-rich annuals, such as zinnias, Mexican sunflower, and lantana, which bloom from spring through fall.

PLANT IN DRIFTS. Butterflies floating overhead are attracted to groups of flowers.

SELECT SINGLES. Include perennials and annuals that have larger, single daisy type flowers. A butterfly will spend more time and save energy visiting one large blossom to gather nectar.

GO NATIVE. Add some plants that are native to our region. Native plants support thousands of species of pollinators including native bees, butterflies, moths, flies, wasps, and flower-visiting beetles.

GROW HOST PLANTS. Create a butterfly nursery by growing their preferred food plants. For example, Black Swallowtails will lay eggs on dill, fennel, and parsley.

BE A LAZY GARDENER. Hold off on fall cleanup of annuals and perennials until spring. Some butterfly chrysalises (pupas) overwinter in the garden.

BE A BUTTERFLY BARTENDER. Place a shallow dish of wet sand or water where butterflies can sip water. Some species visit wet sites to glean salts and nutrients not found in nectar.

GET INVOLVED AND LEARN. Join the North American Butterfly Association, naba.org.

SKIP THE PESTICIDES. Many products are indiscriminate and will kill all kinds of caterpillars.

What is a Pollinator Garden?

DID YOU KNOW.....

Approximately 200,000 species of pollinators are beneficial insects such as bees, flies, beetles, wasps, and butterflies. Hummingbirds represent a small percentage of natural pollinators. Honey bees and native bees (bumble bees, carpenter bees, sweat bees, mining bees, mason bees, etc.) are critical to our food supply and pollinate about one-third of the foods we enjoy.

Bees as well as other pollinators are also essential components of the habitats and ecosystems that many wild animals rely on for food and shelter. As natural areas are cleared for development, and pesticides are sprayed, pollinator habitat is destroyed or fragmented, resulting in the loss of foraging and nesting sites. This can lead to a decline in pollinator population.

One big way we can help pollinators is by planting forage habitat that provides nectar and pollen. Our main goal is to have plants that flower throughout the growing season, from early spring-late fall, with periods of overlapping bloom periods.



*A
Haven for*

Bees
butterflies
birds



*"What is a butterfly?
At best, he's but a
caterpillar dressed."*

Benjamin Franklin

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to lend a helping hand*
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Native Plants

WHY NATIVE PLANTS?



North Carolina is home to thousands of native plant species. Over many millennia, our native wildlife – including birds – have adapted to the resources provided by the native flora. Native plants occur naturally in an area and in a real sense, “home” for our birds.

Virtually all land birds – 96% – require insect food for their young. Native plants support healthy populations of insects, including caterpillars, that breeding birds feed their nestlings.

Planting native plants can help restore the imbalance created by non-native plantings and ensure the survival of future generations of birds.

Bees

TRAITS OF BEE-POLLINATED PLANTS



- Flower colors: bright white, yellow, blue, purple, UV.
- Flowers: many different shapes and sizes.

- Nectar guides present.
- Mild, fragrant odor.
- Nectar usually present.
- Pollen often sticky and scented.



Birds

TRAITS OF BIRD-POLLINATED PLANTS



- Flower colors: scarlet, red orange, white
- Flowers: large funnel-shaped.
- Odor: none.

- No nectar guides.
- Lots of nectar, deep within flower.
- Some pollen.

Above traits referenced at:
www.EcoBeneficial.com

Butterflies

TRAITS OF BUTTERFLY-POLLINATED PLANTS

- Flower colors: usually bright; often red, orange, yellow, purple.
- Flowers: often with a wide landing pad.
- Odor: Slight.
- Nectar guides usually present.
- Lots of nectar, deep within flower.
- Limited pollen.



A very simple explanation for a wonder of nature - METAMORPHOSIS. Many of us have forgotten that the beautiful flying butterfly starts out as a single tiny egg, shortly, it hatches as a caterpillar eating voraciously shedding its skin many times. Finally, it goes into the “resting stage” shedding the larval skin and hanging suspended by a thread until it changes its entire physical structure and emerges as a BUTTERFLY!

In the caterpillar and butterfly stages the insect must EAT. That is where we come in as good stewards of Mother Nature.

From a presentation by Gloria Kidd