Youth Gardening Activity Designing a Butterfly Garden

By Donna Aufdenberg, Field Specialist in Horticulture

Attract these butterflies



Black swallowtail



Monarch



Common buckeye



Eastern tiger swallowtail



Painted lady

How to make a butterfly garden

- Find a location with at least 6 to 8 hours of sunlight.
- Choose an area equal to 100 square foot (roughly 10 ft x 10 ft). Several smaller areas can be planted but they need to be close together and equivalent to 100 sq. ft.

"Old

fashioned

flower

varieties are

butterfly

favorites."

- Plant lots of flowers!
 - ⇒ Different colors.
 - ⇒ Different shapes.
 - ⇒ Different sizes and heights.
- Combine nectar and caterpillar food sources.
- Plant at least 10 plants of two different species to increase butterfly numbers.
- Direct seed flowers and use flower transplants.
- Add a small clay saucer or birdbath with sand or small pebbles in the bottom and shallow water for butterflies.
- Add light colored rocks for basking in the sunlight on cool mornings.
- Add fruit peelings like watermelon or cantaloupe to attract some butterflies.

Fun facts and tips

- There are 198 recorded species of butterflies in Missouri. Each species is unique and requires various nectar and food sources.
- The role of butterflies is important in nature. As pollinators, they help plants produce fruit and seeds.
- Butterflies love the sun. They use it to increase their body temperature, which is necessary for flight.
- Butterflies have food preferences. Flowers with high sugar concentration are best as a food source.
- Lifecycle of a butterfly is complete metamorphosis: egg, caterpillar, pupa to adult.

Attract these caterpillars



Black swallowtail caterpillar



Monarch caterpillar

Food sources for caterpillars

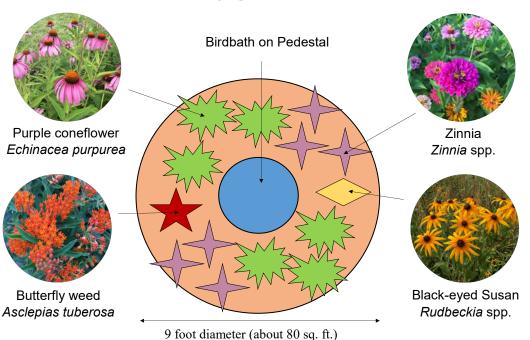


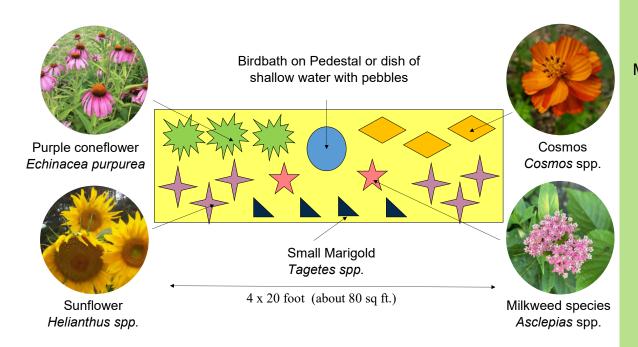
Parsley for black swallowtail caterpillars



Milkweed for monarch caterpillars

Examples of butterfly gardens





Nectar plants from seed

Black-eyed
Susan
Cosmos
Gaillardia
Marigold
Snapdragon
Sunflower
Zinnia

Nectar plants as transplants

Aromatic aster
Butterfly bush
Butterfly weed
Coreopsis
Lantana
Liatris
Milkweed species
Monarda
Phlox
Purple
coneflower

Food for caterpillars

Dill
Hollyhock
Milkweed
Parsley
Snapdragon

Resources

MU Extension publication M404, <u>Native Insect Pollinators and Their Habitats</u> (https://extension.missouri.edu/publications/m404)

Missouri Botanical Garden Butterfly Gardening (PDF) (https://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/Portals/0/Gardening/Gardening%20Help/Factsheets/Butterfly%20Gardening4.pdf)



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