

# Butterfly Plants and Mississippi Butterflies



Butterflies and their host plants are intricately tied to one another. Generally, there are two types of plants that you must have in your garden for butterflies. One is a nectar plant (or plants); adult butterflies feed on these nectar plants. The second plant you must have is a larval host plant; the immature stage (larva) feeds on this plant.

When you plan a butterfly garden, you should plan for both types of plants. This information sheet lists both types of plants and some of the butterflies we can expect to see in Mississippi.

Many kinds of butterflies will usually visit the nectar plants, but you must be careful when choosing a larval host plant if you want to attract a particular species of butterfly. Also, remember the larval plant will be eaten, so expect that to happen and plan accordingly.

## Selected Nectar Plants For Mississippi Butterfly Gardens

Angel's Trumpet – *Datura meteloides*  
Bee Balm – *Monarda didyma*  
Black-Eyed-Susan – *Rudbeckia* spp.  
Butterfly Bush – *Buddleia davidii*  
Cardinal Flower – *Lobelia cardinalis*  
Cleome – *Cleome pungens*  
Common Mallow – *Malva neglecta*  
Coneflower – *Echinacea* spp.  
Coreopsis – *Coreopsis* spp.  
Cosmos – *Cosmos* spp.  
Dame's Rocket – *Hesperis matronalis*  
Dogwood – *Cornus florida*  
Frikart Aster – *Aster x Frikartii*  
Garden Phlox – *Phlox paniculata*  
Gayfeathers – *Liatris* spp.  
Glossy Abelia – *Abelia grandiflora*  
Goldenrod – *Solidago* spp.

Gomphrena – *Gomphrena globosa*  
Hardy Ageratum – *Conoclinium coelestinum*  
Hibiscus – *Hibiscus* spp.  
Hollyhock – *Alcea rosea*  
Hollyhock Mallow – *Malva alcea*  
Joe-Pye Weed – *Eupatorium purpureum*  
Lantana – *Lantana* spp.  
Milkweed – *Asclepias* spp.  
Musk Mallow – *Malva moschata*  
Ox-Eye Daisy – *Leucanthemum vulgare*  
Passion Flower – *Passiflora incarnata*  
Pentas – *Pentas lanceolata*  
Queen-Anne's-Lace – *Daucus carota*  
Sages – *Salvia* spp.  
Shasta Daisies – *Leucanthemum superbum*  
Showy Sedum – *Sedum spectabile*  
Spicebush – *Lindera benzoin*  
Swamp Sunflower – *Helianthus angustifolius*  
Sweet William – *Dianthus barbatus*  
Verbena – *Verbena* spp.  
Willow – *Salix* spp.  
Yarrows – *Achillea* spp.  
Zinnia – *Zinnia* spp.

## Selected Larval Plants For Mississippi Butterfly Gardens

Anise Hyssop – *Agastache foeniculum*  
Black Cherry – *Prunus serotina*  
Common Mallow – *Malva neglecta*  
Dill Weed – *Anethum graveolens*  
Dogwood – *Cornus florida*  
Dutchman's pipe – *Aristolochia durior*  
Fennel – *Foeniculum vulgare*  
Frikart Aster – *Aster x Frikartii*  
Hollyhock – *Alcea rosea*  
Hollyhock Mallow – *Malva alcea*  
Milkweed – *Asclepias* spp.  
Mullein – *Verbascum* spp.  
Nasturtium – *Nasturtium* spp.  
New England Asters – *Aster novae-angliae*



Parsley – *Petroselinum crispum*  
Passion Flower – *Passiflora incarnata*  
Pawpaw – *Asimina triloba*  
Queen-Anne's-Lace – *Daucus carota*  
Rue – *Ruta graveolus*  
Sassafras – *Sassafras albidum*  
Spicebush – *Lindera benzoin*  
Sweet Bay – *Magnolia virginiana*  
Verbena – *Verbena* spp.  
Willow – *Salix* spp.

Host plants ensure food sources for butterfly species. When the plants are available for both larva and adults, they will come. Feeders, water, and mineral sources can provide additional incentives for butterflies to visit and remain in the garden area.

### Common Butterflies Found in Mississippi

American Painted Lady – *Vanessa virginiensis*  
Buckeye – *Junonia coenia*  
Comma – *Polygonia comma*  
Gulf Fritillary – *Agraulis vanillae*  
Hackberry – *Asterocampa celtis*  
Mourning Cloak – *Nymphalis antiopa*  
Painted Lady – *Vanessa cardui*  
Pearly Crescentspot – *Phyciodes tharos*  
Question Mark – *Polygonia interrogationis*  
Red Admiral – *Vanessa atalanta*  
Red-spotted Purple – *Basilarchia astyanax*

Viceroy – *Basilarchia archippus*  
Brown Elfin – *Insicalia augustinus*  
Eastern Pygmy Blue – *Brephidium isophthalma*  
Gray Hairstreak – *Strymon melinus*  
Silvery Blue – *Glaucopsyche lygdamus*  
Spring Azure – *Celastrina ladon*  
Monarch – *Danaus plexippus*  
Queen – *Danaus gilippus*  
Large Wood Nymph – *Ceryonis pegala*  
Common Checkered Skipper – *Pyrgus communis*  
Silver-spotted Skipper – *Epargyreus clarus*  
Tawney-edged skipper – *Polites themistocles*  
Eastern Black Swallowtail – *Papilio polyxenes*  
Giant Swallowtail – *Papilio cresphontes*  
Pipevine Swallowtail – *Battus philenor*  
Spicebush Swallowtail – *Papilio troilus*  
Tiger Swallowtail – *Papilio glaucus*  
Zebra Swallowtail – *Eurytides marcellus*  
Cabbage White – *Pieris rapae*  
Checkered White – *Pontia protodice*  
Cloudless Giant Sulfur – *Phoebis sennae*  
Common Sulphur – *Colias philodice*  
Dogface butterfly – *Zerene cesonia*  
Falcate Orangetip – *Anthocharis midea*  
Orange Sulphur – *Colias eurytheme*  
Sleepy Orange – *Eurema nicippe*

*For more information on butterflies, visit these web sites:*

**Butterflies and Moths of North America Web Site:**

<http://www.butterfliesandmoths.org/>

**North American Butterfly Association**

<http://www.naba.org/>

**North American Butterfly Association Newsletter**

<http://www.naba.org/pubs/bg.html>



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Compiled by Michael R. Williams, Ph.D., Former Extension Entomology Specialist, and Lelia Scott Kelly, Ph.D., Associate Extension Professor.

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**Information Sheet 1661**

Extension Service of Mississippi State University, cooperating with U.S. Department of Agriculture. Published in furtherance of Acts of Congress, May 8 and June 30, 1914. MELISSA J. MIXON, Interim Director

POD 02-10