

Pesticides kill butterflies. Although situations and chemicals vary, some pesticides can kill every insect that physically comes in contact with them. Set aside a garden for butterflies. Do not use pesticides and let the caterpillars eat and grow to produce more butterflies. Remember, plants generally tolerate damage to their leaves much better than do the gardeners that tend them.

## **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

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The following books and organizations can help you learn more about butterflies.

### **BOOKS**

The Butterfly Book by Donald and Lillian Stokes and Ernest Williams. Published by Little, Brown and Company. 1991.

Butterflies and Skippers of Ohio by David C. Iftner, John A. Shuey, and John V. Calhoun. A bulletin of the Ohio Biological Survey. 1992.

Butterflies and Moths. Published by Golden Press. 1964.

The Butterfly Garden by Jerry Sedenko. Published by Villard Books. 1991.

### **ORGANIZATIONS**

The Ohio Lepidopterists, c/o Roger A. Zebold, 675-B Sprague Rd., Wilmington, OH 45177

The Butterfly Gardening Association, c/o Alan Moore, 1021 North Main St., Allentown, PA 18104.

The Young Entomologists, 1915 Peggy Place, Lansing, MI 43910-2553.

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**DIVISION OF WILDLIFE**  
**Ohio Department of Natural Resources**

# **BACKYARDS FOR BUTTERFLIES**



*for Wildlife*

More than 140 different kinds of butterflies have been recorded in Ohio. You won't find all of them in your backyard, but more than two dozen species, ranging in size from the tiny blue spring azure to the magnificent monarch and tiger swallowtail are common across the state. If you want to attract wildlife to your property, start with butterflies!

The life cycle of butterflies may seem straight forward but many species have interesting variations on the theme called "complete metamorphosis". Some butterfly species complete the cycle several times in one year, others only once. Some species overwinter as eggs, some as larvae, and some as pupae. Some disregard the rules altogether. No leaves for the caterpillar of the harvester butterfly; it feeds on aphids!

Most butterflies are short-lived. Few live more than 7-10 days, with the exception of overwintering species, such as monarchs, mourning cloaks, and question marks, which may live as long as six months.

## NECTAR SOURCES

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Butterfly watching is a growing pastime with some predicting it will soon become as popular as bird watching. Nectar-producing flowers with multiple florets and broad petals provide convenient landing pads where butterflies can rest and sip nectar. Plan your gardens so that nectar is available from early spring through late fall. Cultivated annuals and perennials as well as native wild flowers offer a variety of planting options. Here is a list of some flowers that attract butterflies:

Lilac	Zinnia
Phlox	Cosmos
Butterfly milkweed	Butterfly bush
Ironweed	Goldenrod
New England aster	Anise hyssop
Mexican sunflower	Wooly applemint
Purple coneflower	Gooseneck loosestrife

## HOST PLANTS

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Caterpillars are butterflies, too! Many caterpillars are fussy eaters; some rely on only one or two species of plants as a food source. Others, such as the red-spotted purple, will feed on a variety of deciduous trees. You may already be providing host plants and not realize it. The following list shows some common butterflies and the host plants used by their caterpillars.

Monarch	Milkweeds
Black swallowtail	Parsley family: dill, parsley, carrot
Great spangled fritillary	Violets
Buckeye	Plantain
Silver-spotted skipper	Black locust
Spring azure	Dogwood, viburnum

## OTHER WAYS TO ATTRACT BUTTERFLIES

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Butterflies are sun-lovers. They use the sun to navigate. They use the sun to raise their body temperature so that they can fly. Most lay their eggs on plants that grow in full sun. The more sun your backyard butterfly garden gets, the more butterflies you're likely to see. On cool days, butterflies bask in the sunlight and seek bare areas, such as rock outcrops, where they can take full advantage of the sun's rays.

Provide a spot sheltered from gusty winds and you're likely to see even more butterflies. It takes less energy to fly in still air than in a breeze.

Butterflies drink water but most is sipped from the surface of damp soil rather than deep puddles. You can offer a shallow dish of damp sand as a water source. Occasionally, you may see many butterflies gathered around a shallow wet spot, a behavior known as puddling. These butterflies are not drinking; most are males, gathering extra nutrients such as sodium. Tiger swallowtails, fritillaries, and painted ladies are a few Ohio species you may see in such groups.