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

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

BOOKS


Butterflies and Moths. Published by Golden Press. 1964.


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.
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 straightforward 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**

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

**HOST PLANTS**

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
- Black swallowtail
- Great spangled fritillary
- Buckeye
- Silver-spotted skipper
- Spring azure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monarch</th>
<th>Milkweeds</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black swallowtail</td>
<td>Parsley family: dill, parsley, carrot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great spangled fritillary</td>
<td>Violets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buckeye</td>
<td>Plantain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silver-spotted skipper</td>
<td>Black locust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring azure</td>
<td>Dogwood, viburnum</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**OTHER WAYS TO ATTRACT BUTTERFLIES**

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.