

## Create a Butterfly Garden

**Did you know** that not only are butterflies beautiful, they have also proven very beneficial in pollinating many varieties of flowering plants. Many plants rely completely on butterflies for pollination.

A water dish, flowers, lots of sunshine and an area with dark moist soil protected from the wind are all you need to create a butterfly garden! Remember to:

- Check your lawn at various times throughout the day to see which area receives the most sun. Butterflies, like all insects, need sunny spots to raise their body temperature.
- Avoid using pesticides around these plants. Butterflies are as affected by pesticides as much as harmful insects.
- Provide the butterflies with a water source. Any type of shallow container will work. Give them fresh water often.
- Be sure to include plants for all life stages. This means nectar plants for adult butterflies and host plants for caterpillars.

### **Good Butterfly Nectar Plants and Caterpillar Host Plants:**

- Ageratum, Milkweed, Dill, Fennel, Parsley, Bee-balm, Coneflower, Passion Vine, Mustard, Hibiscus, Marigold, Salvia, Day Lily, Mallow, Phlox, Zinnia, Dahlia, Asters, Lantana, Impatiens, Butterfly Bush, Lilac, Snapdragons, Sassafras Tree, Cosmos, Blue Porterweed.

### **Where have all the butterflies gone?**

- Due to loss of habitat, butterflies are rapidly disappearing. Wild flowers are often confused as weeds and are eliminated with herbicides. Butterflies depend on these flowers for food. When the flowers die, butterflies have no food or place to lay eggs. Butterflies are also very sensitive to air pollution. Even slight carbon monoxide from car exhaust can affect butterflies.

### **What Else Can I do to Help Butterflies?**

- Learn about the butterflies in your area. Keep a journal of the different species you see in your garden.
- Try to buy organically grown food at your local market. These butterfly friendly foods are produced without the use of pesticides or chemical fertilizers.
- Use natural insect-controls such as predatory insects. Ladybugs and praying mantises are nature's pest control. As carnivores, they feed on many harmful insects and serve as great protectors of your garden. Order these insects from your local garden center.
- Support organizations that are active in butterfly research and conservation.
- Reduce carbon monoxide by walking, carpooling or even purchasing a hybrid car and help keep the air clean.
- Visit [www.nwf.org](http://www.nwf.org) to learn more about Backyard Habitats.

Butterflies go through a "complete" metamorphosis. This cycle includes egg, larva, pupa and finally adult stages.