Design your own Butterfly Garden

- Design your garden so that the flowering plants are in a sunny location. Butflies only actively feed when the sun is shining, therefore, flowers in shade will rarely be used. Flowering plants are also generally more likely to have more flowers in a sunny location. Protect your butterfly plants from windy conditions as this provides a better environment for the butterflies.
- It’s good to have vegetation that blooms year round and ones with a staggered blooming season so there is food year round.
- Provide at least one puddle area since butterflies can’t drink from open water. You can make a watering station for butterflies by adding sand to the saucer of a birdbath to reduce the depth and add a rock to the center for a resting spot. A large clay saucer will do fine.
- Butterflies are territorial. If you want to, you could put plants for one butterfly in a section and plants for another type of butterfly in a different area. But it’s perfect all right to mix them through the area.
- Two months before planting, kill the grass and weeds growing in your garden area. Repeat the treatment in order to kill newly sprouted seedlings. This will help to insure that weeds do not overtake the desirable plant materials. Establish your garden design by laying out pathways and entryways and by situating it so that you can see the butterflies from your home or outdoor seating area.
- There are 160 species of butterflies in Florida and 10 are common in our area.
- DO NOT use insecticides and herbicides in your habitat – the same plants that butterflies love red pentas, especially Giant Swallowtail.
- Hummingbirds go hand in hand with butterflies – the same plants often attract both. Hummingbirds are in the area in winter from November through February.
- Hummingbirds don’t like to come closer than three feet to the ground, so they need tall bushes.

PLANTS

- Host plant = Eggs are laid on and larva feed on.
- Nectar = Adult butterflies eat its nectar.

Must Have’s

- Corky Stemmed Passion Vine (passiflora absuban) – 4 butterflies key eggs including Gulf Fritillary, Zebra Longwing and Julia.
- Wind Break Plants – around outside
  - Necklace pod = sophora tomentosa
  - Peregina = Jacarpha nigragrana
  - Wild coffee = psychotria nervosa
  - Cassia = can’t have too many cassia’s
- Bahama Cassia = cassia bahemesis
  - Sulphurs, Cloudless Sulphur H&N
- Apple blossom Shower = Cassia javonica
  - Sulphurs
- Glaucous cassia = cassia amettens Sulphurs
- Desert cassia = sessa polyphylla Sulphurs
- Popcorn cassia = cassia stipulata
- Privet cassia* = cassia agavatina
  - Sulphurs, Cloudless Sulphur H&N

*Chicks love Sulphur butterfly caterpillars, so Cassia’s get Cocked ears.

Blue porterweed – stachyophyta jamaicensis (hardmanae)
- Coonie – zamia pumila
  - Only native food for Florida Axile butterfly. Thought to be extinct, but coming back because butterfly people are planting coonie. South Florida native, pine rockland plant.
- Bahama Cassia – cassia bahemesis
  - Privet Cassia = Cassia bipinnata
  - These trees are both the larval and nectar plant for Cloudless Sulphurs and Orange Barred Sulphurs. South Florida natives.

Wild Lime – Santalum freinigerum
- Host and nectar plant for Giant Swallowtail and Schaus Swallowtail. South Florida native plant.

Red Pentas – Pentas lanceolata
- All the butterflies love red pentas, especially Giant Swallowtail, it’s a nectar plant.

Coral Gables Branch Library
Butterfly Garden
COMMUNITY PROJECT
In 2001, the Coral Gables Branch Library “Butterfly Garden” was completed and dedicated. The Garden provides citizens access to butterfly habitat in the center of the city. The Garden is located across from the Library and is open to the public. The Garden is a project of the Coral Gables Garden Club and the Coral Gables Public Library System. The Garden is maintained by the Garden Club and volunteers. The Garden is a popular gathering place for children and adults alike.

Linda Lawrence, serving as Chairperson of the “Butterfly Garden” Committee of the Coral Gables Garden Club, was responsible for the exceptional leadership in establishing this institute club project for the community and wrote and compiled the Butterfly Garden brochure. The Garden Club purchased butterfly plants for the garden and private individual donors belong to the Coral Gables Garden Club donated commemorative benches. Dan Keys, Coral Gables Public Service Director, spearheaded the project. He designed and installed a beautiful, visitor friendly, outdoor botanical garden to attract butterflies.

In addition, the City of Coral Gables 2001 Library Advisory Board participated as advocates for this outstanding community project. The board included Chairperson Carolyn Jinkin and members Kathy Gauzts, Linda Lawrence, Elise Wood, Susan Elwood, and Coral Gables Commissioner Dorothy Thomson, City Commissioner Library Liaison.

We invite you to meander down the Garden’s path of sunshine, warmth, and color and enjoy the beautiful plants and butterflies while using the Butterfly Garden brochure as a guide.

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**Garden’s Creation**

“Happiness is a butterfly, which when pursued, is always just beyond your grasp, but which, if you will sit down quietly, may light upon you.”

— Nathaniel Hawthorne

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**Butterflies & Their Host Plants (Larval)**

**Gulf Fritillary**
Latin: Agraulis vanillae
Eats: Curly stem passion vine
Description: Bright orange with black and silver spots. Adults live all year round in South Florida.

**Zebra Longwing**
Latin: heliconius charitonius
Eats: Euchlaena chionides
Description: Black with yellow spots. Occurs all year round in South Florida. In late afternoon, seeks out a perch on which to spend the night. Frequently many butterflies will cluster on the same perch night after night for many weeks. Official State Butterfly of Florida.

**Brushfooted Butterflies**
One of the largest butterfly families. Called Brushfoot because front legs of both sexes are so small it looks like they have 4 instead of the usual 6 legs. Twenty-three species are known to breed in Florida. Most are medium sized, but colors and wing shapes vary. Although the tiny front legs are no use in supporting the butterfly, they contain sensors which help the butterfly identify food plants for its larva.

**Hairy Brick Butterfly**
Latin: Eumaeus atala
Eats: Curly stem passion vine
Description: Beautiful iridescent blue with dark orange abdomen and bright red/orange abdomen. Rare, was thought to be extinct, but is coming back because of efforts of butterfly gardeners.

**Cloudless Sulphur**
Latin: Phoebis sennae
Eats: Privet cassia
Description: Beautiful yellow butterfly with black borders and stripes.

**Sulphurs and Whites**
Sulphurs and Whites are easily recognized by their yellow and white colors. Both usually have black markings. Sulphurs are usually associated with plants in the legume family (beans and peas). Whites are often seen around types of mustards.

**Great Southern White**
Latin: Ascia monuste phileta
Eats: Milkweed
Description: Lays eggs on wild and tropical milkweeds. Milkweeds protect the caterpillars and adults from being eaten by predators.

**Orange Barred Sulphur**
Latin: Phoebis philea
Eats: Bahamas cassia
Description: Yellow with orange bands. Found all year round in South Florida.

**Monarch and Queen Butterflies**
These are called milkweed butterflies because the larva feed on milkweed. Milkweeds produce a toxic sap and the caterpillars and adults absorb these toxins which protects them from being eaten by predators.

**Orange Brown Sulphur**
Latin: Phoebis philea
Eats: Bahamas cassia
Description: Orange butterfly with black borders.

**Sleepy Orange Sulphur**
Latin: Euphydryas editha
Eats: Bahamas cassia
Description: Orange butterfly with black borders.

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**Eastern Swallowtail**
Latin: Papilio polyxenes
Common: Black Swallowtail
Eats: Parsley, Dill, Fennel
Description: Small dark butterfly with greenish yellow bands on wings.

**Swallowtail Polydamas**
Latin: Battus philenor
Eats: Dutchman’s pipe vine
Latin: Aristolochia
Description: Large blackish butterfly with greenish yellow bands on wings.

**Spice Bush Swallowtail**
Latin: Papilio troilus
Eats: Red Bay
Description: Large, black with pale greenish yellow spots.

**Giant Swallowtail**
Latin: Heracles cresphontes
Eats: Chrys – Wild Lime is the native
Zanthoxylum fagara
Description: Dade & Keys native, large black and yellow butterfly.

**Palamedes Swallowtail**
Latin: Papilio palamedes
Eats: Red Bay
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**Queen**
Latin: Danaus gilippus
Eats: Butterfly weed – Scarlet, Striped, Tropical
Latin: Asclepias tuberosa, Asclepias curassavica
Description: Is Florida’s resident milkweed butterfly. It is chestnut orange with a broad, dark margin around wings and a scattering of small white spots.

**Monarch**
Latin: Danaus plexippus
Eats: Butterfly weed – Scarlet, Striped, Tropical
Latin: Asclepias tuberosa, Asclepias curassavica, Asclepias curassavica
Description: Is boldly marked black and orange. It is seen statewide usually from late fall until early spring.

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