



Suitable Conditions

The goal of butterfly gardening is to introduce plants and create suitable conditions that will attract and encourage more butterflies to live there. If conditions are right, butterflies will appear on flowering plants starting in late spring through the summer. With some simple planning, you can create a garden that provides for a butterfly's entire life cycle. There are just a few basics required for a butterfly garden.

Required Basics

Sunshine and Protection: Place the garden in a sunny location that is protected from the wind. Butterflies tend to be most active on sunny, calm days when temperatures range from 65 to 95 degrees. Planting trees or shrubs nearby provides the needed protection from the wind while butterflies are feeding. Butterflies also need to warm their bodies in order to fly. By placing some rocks around the garden, it provides added areas for the butterflies to heat themselves before flight.

Moisture: Butterflies not only feed on nectar, but also on water provided by streams and morning dew. Create depressions in your garden where water can pool providing a water supply between irrigation cycles.

Flowers: In a butterfly garden, you should provide both nectar sources and larval food plants. Adult butterflies feed on the nectar of certain flowers, while caterpillars feed on specific plants. Therefore, it is important to have an adequate mix of plants that will support larvae and other plants available for adults.



Listed below are just a few common plants that will attract butterflies in your garden. Make sure to refer to the approved plant list in your community's residential design guidelines to see what specific plants are permitted in your landscape.

Plant Recommendations:

Nectar Plants

Red Bird of Paradise	SH
Desert Willow	TR
Desert Orchid	WF
Evening Primrose	GC
Ruellia	SH
Butterfly Bush	SH

Larval Plants

Sage Varieties	SH
Penstemon	GC
Arizona Sycamore	TR

Nectar and Larval Plants

Desert Milkweed	SH
Baja Fairy Duster	SH
Trailing Lantana	GC
Texas Honey Mesquite	TR

Index:	GC - Ground Cover	SH - Shrub
	WF - Wildflower	TR - Tree

