Butterflies in the Garden

Of the many creatures at home in the garden, few can match the grace and beauty of butterflies. They are important pollinators and a delight to see in any garden.

A garden that includes plants for the entire life cycle will attract a variety of native butterflies. Butterfly larvae need host plants for food and as a place to pupate, while adult butterflies require nectar sources for food and plants for egg-laying.

Tips for Planting a Butterfly Garden

- Place your garden in a sunny place and provide rocks for butterflies to bask in the sun. Butterflies are sun-lovers and cannot fly until the sun's warmth heats their bodies.
- Group plants together to create a mass of color.
- Plant shrubs and trees nearby to offer a hiding place from predators and to shelter butterflies from the wind.
- Provide moisture. Butterflies extract water and minerals from damp soil.
- Avoid pesticides. They kill butterflies and their caterpillars.

To attract a diversity of butterflies and other pollinators in your garden, select a variety of plants with different floral colors, shapes, sizes and bloom times. The following plants are native to the Mid-Atlantic region and are listed based on their benefit for the different butterfly stages.

Caterpillar Host Plants	Plants for Nectar Sources
Trees	**Shrubs**
* *Salix caroliniana* (willow)	* *Symphyotrichum*spp., *Eurybia*spp., etc. (aster species)
* *Asimina triloba*(pawpaw)	* *Coreopsis verticillata* (whorled tickseed)
* *Betula nigra* (river birch)	* *Echinacea*spp. (coneflower)
* *Carpinus caroliniana*(American hornbeam)	* *Eupatorium fistulosum*(Joe Pye weed)
* *Cercis canadensis*(Eastern redbud)	* *Gaillardia*x *grandiflora* (blanket flower)
* *Cornus florida*(dogwood)	* *Gaura lindheimeri*(Lindheimer's beeblossom)
* *Juniperus virginiana* (Eastern red cedar)	* *Heliopsis helianthoides* (smooth oxeye)
* *Ptelea trifoliata*(common hop-tree)	* *Hibiscusmoscheutos (rose-mallow)*
* *Sassafras albidum*(sassafras)	* *Nepeta* x *faassenii* (giant catmint)
* *Quercus velutina*(black oak)	* *Oenothera* spp. (evening primrose)
Shrubs	* *Phlox carolina* (thickleaf phlox)
* *Lindera benzoin* (spicebush)	* *Phlox paniculata*(fall phlox)
* *Rhus* spp. (sumac)	* *Parthenium integrifolium*(American feverfew)
* *Viburnum dentatum*	* *Rudbeckia fulgida* (Black-eyed Susan)
Herbaceous Perennials	* *Sedum*spp.
* *Antennaria plantaginifolia* (pussy toes)	
* *Symphyotrichum* spp., *Eurybia*spp., etc. (aster species)	
* *Asclepias incarnata*(swamp milkweed)	
* *Chelone glabra, C. lyonii* (turtlehead)	
* *Penstemon digitalis* (talus slope penstemon)	

* *Panicum virgatum* (switchgrass)

Grasses

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