

An Introduction to Butterfly Gardening

If you want to bring butterflies into your garden, then you must make it more appealing to them. You will have to include plants which caterpillars are able to use, nourishment for adult butterflies, as well as a place where butterflies can breed effectively.

Something else you will need to consider is protection from the wind; most types of butterflies need this sort of shelter. Even though they tend to prefer open areas which allow a lot of sunlight, you will probably have to set up a windbreak of some kind to shelter them from potentially disturbing high winds.

Butterflies will often group near the edge of a mud puddle. You may have seen this before. No one is quite sure why it is that butterflies like mud puddles as much as they do, but it is thought that there may be particular minerals which are available in muddy water. So if you wish to appeal to more butterflies, you may consider maintaining some damp areas within your garden.

Female butterflies will need certain plants which may be eaten by their newly hatched caterpillars. For example, black swallowtails prefer dill and parsley, but monarch butterflies will typically lay their eggs only on milkweed. Female butterflies expend a lot of energy searching for these particular plants so that they may lay their eggs.

Adult butterflies will eat nectar from a variety of flowers. Flowers which contain more nectar are more attractive to these butterflies. This type of flower is usually brightly colored and sweetly scented. There are some species of butterflies which feed on honeydew produced by aphids. And some will even feed on plant sap, bird feces, or rotting fruit!

When you construct your butterfly garden, you should include at least one large patch of flowers which will attract butterflies. Also, you may want to use flowers which bloom in sequence, since this would encourage butterflies to visit your garden even more often.

You should keep in mind that many of the flowers which are preferred by some butterflies are considered to be weeds. As an example, dandelion can be very attractive to a variety of butterflies. Another weed which many kinds of butterflies enjoy is thistle.

You may notice that some butterflies frequent an herb or vegetable garden. The European cabbage butterfly likes cabbage, broccoli, and other varieties of cruciferous vegetables. As aforementioned, the black swallowtail will often visit herbs such as dill or parsley.

You should not use any insecticides in your butterfly garden unless it is absolutely necessary, since they may kill caterpillars. Some types of insecticides will also kill adult butterflies if they land on plants which have been treated with insecticides, or if they drink any nectar that has been polluted by poison.

Certain flowers you may wish to plant if you want to draw in butterflies include cruciferous vegetables such as broccoli or cabbage, herbs such as parsley or dill, as well as many kinds of flowers. There are some great flowers for use in butterfly gardens like the butterfly bush, asters, verbena, lilacs, sunflowers, zinnias, marigolds, cosmos, bee balm, thistles, and sweet pea.

Making your garden a hospitable place for butterflies does not take much extra work. If you simply keep a small, damp area for them and include a few plants which they will enjoy, that is usually enough to bring in a good number of butterflies.

About the Author

Source: <http://divgardeningtips.com>