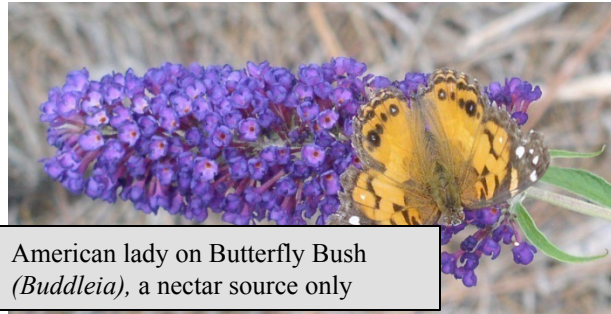


WILLIAMSBURG BOTANICAL GARDEN



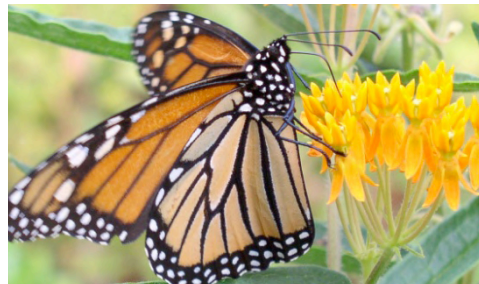
American lady on Butterfly Bush (*Buddleia*), a nectar source only

BUTTERFLIES AND THEIR HOST PLANTS

Most plants in the Butterfly Garden furnish nectar for many butterflies, and several are specific host plants, providing food for butterfly larvae. While butterflies gain quick energy from sweet nectar, when it is time to lay eggs, they will choose only plants that will be food sources for the growing larva. Some butterflies will lay eggs on a number of host plants, but many other butterflies are specialists, requiring only one species of plant for reproduction.

Monarch butterflies can be found on many species of milkweed plants which are also food for their caterpillars. It is easy to encourage monarchs with a continuous bloom of milkweed species from June through September, especially important as their overwintering habitat in the mountains of central Mexico is increasingly threatened by development.

Monarch on Butterfly Weed (*Asclepias tuberosa*), a larval host plant



Eastern Tiger Swallowtail (dark form) taking nectar from Verbena; caterpillars will feed on Sassafras tree leaves

Specialists include the Black Swallowtail which requires members of the carrot family: parsley, dill and fennel to complete development, the Zebra Swallowtail which eats only pawpaw and the Spicebush Swallowtail which develops on spicebush and sassafras.

Native grasses are hosts for the Northern Broken-Dash, Little Wood Satyr and the Silver-spotted Skipper.



This Great Spangled Fritillary will take nectar from purple coneflower, but will lay eggs on Violets



A Red-spotted Purple and a larval host plant, Black Cherry (*Prunus serotina*)



Native trees are hosts for many coastal butterflies. The Tiger Swallowtail prefers black cherry and tulip tree but will use willow, ash and birch as well. Henry's Elfin lays eggs on Redbud and American Holly, the Hackberry Emperor uses the Hackberry tree and the Viceroy looks for willows.

All butterflies require full sun to warm their wings for flying, long summer days for maximum nectar-gathering, and mud puddles to furnish minerals essential for sperm and egg production. Planting native perennials, trees and shrubs in a garden will bring many beautiful butterflies to feed and reproduce on the plants which have evolved with them.

For more information, contact
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All butterflies shown here can be seen in the Ellipse Garden in Freedom Park

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