Butterflies and their host plants are intricately tied to one another. Generally, there are two types of plants that you must have in your garden for butterflies. One is a nectar plant (or plants); adult butterflies feed on these nectar plants. The second plant you must have is a larval host plant; the immature stage (larva) feeds on this plant.

When you plan a butterfly garden, you should plan for both types of plants. This information sheet lists both types of plants and some of the butterflies we can expect to see in Mississippi.

Many kinds of butterflies will usually visit the nectar plants, but you must be careful when choosing a larval host plant if you want to attract a particular species of butterfly. Also, remember the larval plant will be eaten, so expect that to happen and plan accordingly.

**Selected Nectar Plants**

**For Mississippi Butterfly Gardens**

- Angel's Trumpet – *Datura meteloides*
- Bee Balm – *Monarda didyma*
- Black-Eyed-Susan – *Rudbeckia spp.*
- Butterfly Bush – *Buddleia davidii*
- Cardinal Flower – *Lobelia cardinalis*
- Cleome – *Cleome pungens*
- Common Mallow – *Malva neglecta*
- Coneflower – *Echinacea spp.*
- Coreopsis – *Coreopsis spp.*
- Cosmos – *Cosmos spp.*
- Dame's Rocket – *Hesperis matronalis*
- Dogwood – *Cornus florida*
- Frikart Aster – *Aster x Frikartii*
- Garden Phlox – *Phlox paniculata*
- Gayfeathers – *Liatris spp.*
- Glossy Abelia – *Abelia grandiflora*
- Goldenrod – *Solidago spp.*

**Selected Larval Plants**

**For Mississippi Butterfly Gardens**

- Anise Hyssop – *Agastache foeniculum*
- Black Cherry – *Prunus serotina*
- Common Mallow – *Malva neglecta*
- Dill Weed – *Anethum graveolens*
- Dogwood – *Cornus florida*
- Dutchman's pipe – *Aristolochia durior*
- Fennel – *Foeniculum vulgare*
- Frikart Aster – *Aster x Frikartii*
- Hollyhock – *Alcea rosea*
- Hollyhock Mallow – *Malva alcea*
- Milkweed – *Asclepias spp.*
- Musk Mallow – *Malva moschata*
- Ox-Eye Daisy – *Leucanthemum vulgare*
- Passion Flower – *Passiflora incarnata*
- Pentas – *Pentas lanceolata*
- Queen-Anne’s-Lace – *Daucus carota*
- Sages – *Salvia spp.*
- Shasta Daisies – *Leucanthemum superbum*
- Showy Sedum – *Sedum spectabile*
- Spicebush – *Lindera benzoin*
- Swamp Sunflower – *Helianthus angustifolius*
- Sweet William – *Dianthus barbatus*
- Verbena – *Verbena spp.*
- Willow – *Salix spp.*
- Yarrows – *Achillea spp.*
- Zinnia – *Zinnia spp.*

Butterfly Plants and Mississippi Butterflies
Host plants ensure food sources for butterfly species. When the plants are available for both larva and adults, they will come. Feeders, water, and mineral sources can provide additional incentives for butterflies to visit and remain in the garden area.

**Common Butterflies Found in Mississippi**

**American Painted Lady** – Vanessa virginiensis  
**Buckeye** – Junonia coenia  
**Comma** – Polygonia comma  
**Gulf Fritillary** – Agraulis vanillae  
**Hackberry** – Asterocampa celtis  
**Mourning Cloak** – Nymphalis antiopa  
**Painted Lady** – Vanessa cardui  
**Pearly Crescentspot** – Phyciodes tharos  
**Question Mark** – Polygonia interrogationis  
**Red Admiral** – Vanessa atalanta  

For more information on butterflies, visit these web sites:  
Butterflies and Moths of North America Web Site:  
http://www.butterfliesandmoths.org/  
North American Butterfly Association  
http://www.naba.org/  
North American Butterfly Association Newsletter  
http://www.naba.org/pubs/bg.html