



The Elements of a Butterfly Garden

A successful butterfly garden has four main elements. Simply adding these four essential components to your garden will bring the butterflies and will encourage them to stay around, season after season.

Larval Host Plants

These are the plants on which the female adult butterfly places her eggs. When the larva emerges from the egg, the caterpillar feed on the tender new growth of the plant. Caterpillars have a selective diet and usually eat very specific plants, depending on the butterfly species. The host plants may not be the showiest plants in the area but they are essential to maintaining a butterfly population in your garden.



Atala eggs deposited on Coontie host plant

Shelter

Butterflies need protection from the rain, wind and temperature extremes. They also need protection from predators. It is necessary to provide a wide range of plant material including shrubs and trees for this purpose. Native, canopy trees and small, understory trees are a great addition to any butterfly garden and supply shelter for butterflies and other wildlife.

Water

Providing a water source for butterflies can be as simple as adding a birdbath to your garden. Just add sand to the birdbath and then add enough water to moisten the sand. Butterflies can then soak up the moisture from the sand. Another way to provide water for butterflies is to use decorative boulders in your garden, as long as the boulders have spaces where the water can pool into a small puddle.

Adult Nectar Sources



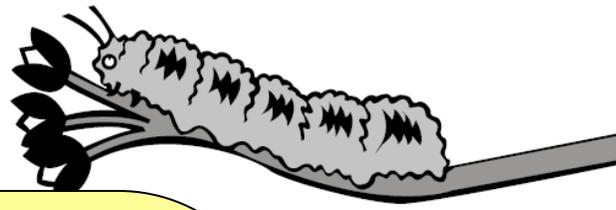
These are the plants that the adult butterflies seek out which provide a sugar-rich fuel called nectar. It is important to have a variety of flowers in a lot of different color choices. Butterflies are very attracted to clusters of short-tubed flowers, however, providing other flower shapes and sizes is necessary to attract a variety of different butterflies.

Zebra Longwing drinking nectar from Jatropha



Avoid chemical pesticides!

Pesticides kill butterflies, caterpillars, and other useful insects. Instead, encourage ladybugs, dragonflies and other beneficial insects to dine in your garden. A strong spray of water from your garden hose is very good at knocking back some of our nuisance pests. Or, use this "safer pesticide": (3) tbsp. of non-fragrance dish soap mixed with (1) gallon of water. Apply this solution in problem areas. Be sure to treat the undersides of the leaves as well.



Choose your Butterflies

To Attract this Butterfly...

Monarch
(*Danaus plexippus*)

Gulf Fritillary
(*Agraulis vanillae*)

Polydamus Swallowtail
(*Battus polydamus*)

Queen
(*Danaus gilippus*)

Giant Swallowtail
(*Papilio cresphontes*)

Cloudless Sulphur
(*Phoebis sennae*)

Orange-barred Sulphur
(*Phoebis philea*)

Zebra Longwing
(*Heliconius charitonius*)

Julia
(*Dryus Julia*)

Atala
(*Eumaeus atala florida*)

White Peacock
(*Anartia jatrophae*)

Viceroy
(*Limenitis archippus*)

Use This Plant

Milkweed
(*Asclepias spp.*)

Passionflower
(*Passiflora spp.* – *incense*,
subarosa, *incarnata*)

Dutchmans Pipevine
(*Aristolochia spp.*)

Milkweed
(*Asclepias spp.*)

Wild Lime
(*Zanthoxylum fagara*)

Wild Senna
(*Cassia spp.* – *surratensis*,
alata, *fistula*)

Wild Senna
(*Cassia spp.* – *surratensis*,
alata, *fistula*)

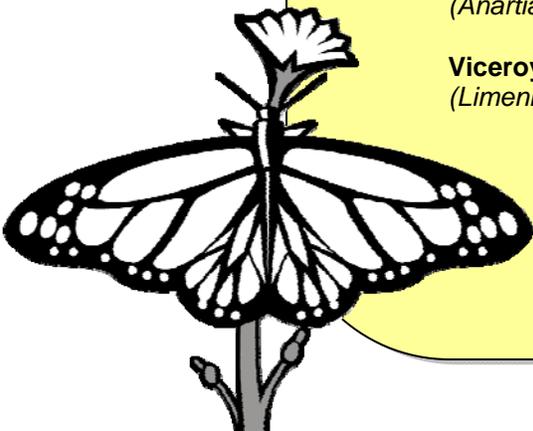
Passionflower
(*Passiflora spp.* – *incense*,
subarosa, *incarnata*)

Passionflower
(*Passiflora spp.* – *incense*,
subarosa, *incarnata*)

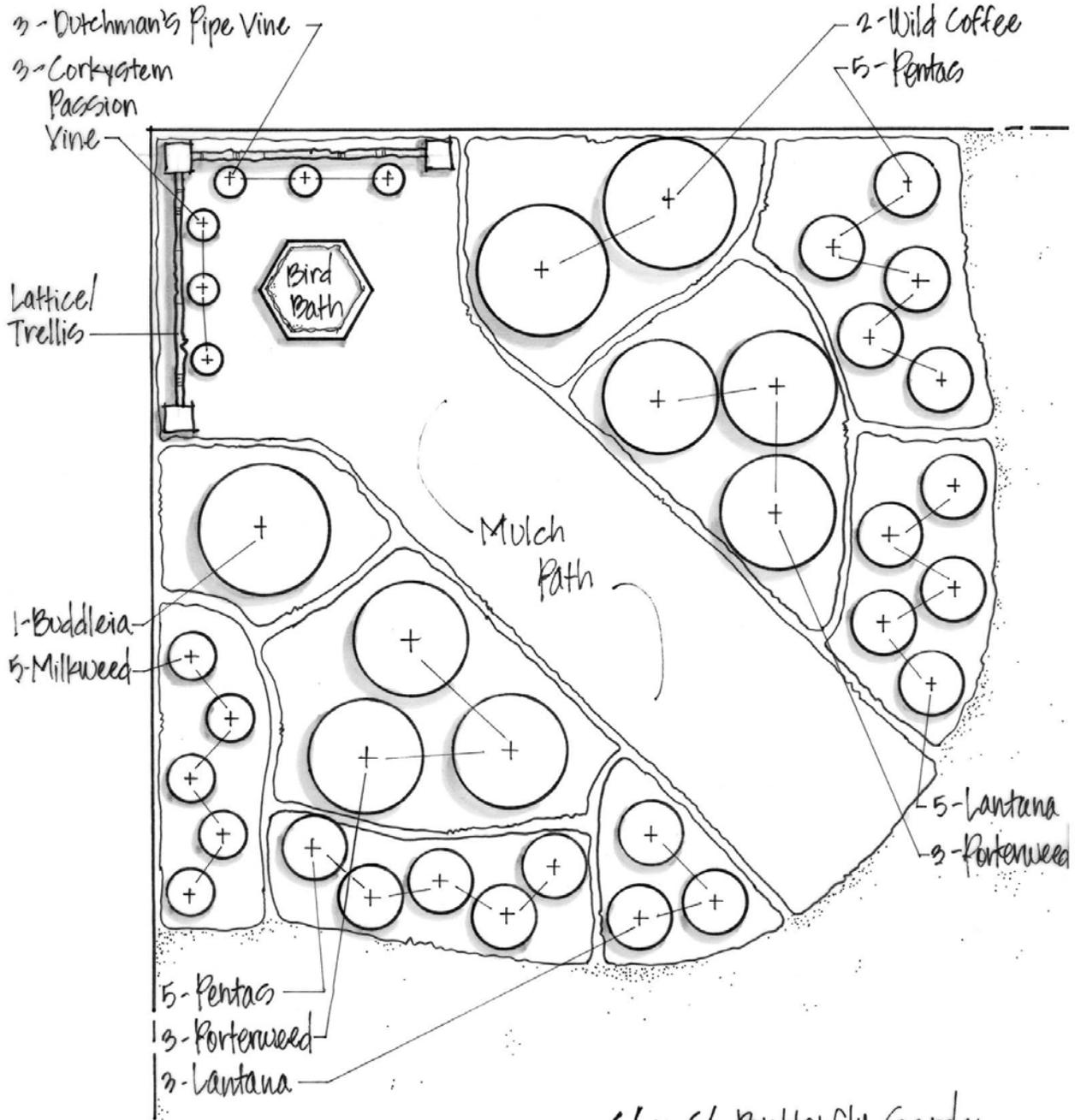
Coontie
(*Zamia pumila*)

Smooth waterhyssop
(*Bacopa monnieri*)

Coastal Plain Willow
(*Salix caroliniana*)



Examples of Small Butterfly Garden Designs



6' x 6' Butterfly Garden
 1" = 1'-0"

