

Butterfly habitat creation

Many butterfly feeding and breeding grounds in Scotland have been destroyed because of new developments and the use of pesticides. The 56 species in Britain and Ireland are under threat today from unprecedented environmental change. Habitats have been destroyed on a massive scale, and now patterns of climate and weather are shifting unpredictably in response to pollution of the atmosphere. Conserving butterflies will improve our whole environment for wildlife and enrich the lives of people now and in the future. For more information on butterflies in Scotland see:

http://www.butterfly-conservation.org/downloads/49/bc_scotland.html and http://www.butterfly-conservation.org/downloads/93/habitat_species_leaflets.html



Caterpillars

Caterpillars or larvae use their chewing mouthparts to eat the leaves and stems of plants, called host plants. Some larvae, like the gypsy moth that feed in great numbers, can completely defoliate a mature host plant in a matter of days. Caterpillars eat "larval" plants like milkweed, marigolds, Queen Anne's lace, and violets.

Butterflies

Rather than the chewing mouthparts of immature caterpillars, adult butterflies have sucking mouthparts shaped into a long coiled tube, called a *proboscis*. The adult butterfly can uncoil its

proboscis and use it to suck up nectar or tree sap. Plants that adult butterflies use for food are called nectar plants like the butterfly bush, the beauty bush, sunflowers, lilacs, snapdragons, and zinnias.

Many butterflies have very specific food requirements. Often the host plant for the caterpillar isn't the same nectar plant for the adult butterfly of the same species. To be successful you must provide both the host and nectar plants that the butterfly species in your area prefer to eat. Select plants that are diverse in colour and bloom at different times, so you will attract butterflies throughout the summer. Check with a nursery to see what plants will grow well in your area, and understand that different plants attract different butterflies and caterpillars. Be sure the area receives five to six hours of sun a day and is sheltered from the wind. Also, a mud puddle in a sunny spot will provide butterflies with other essential salts and nutrients.

The lists below give some examples of common host plants for caterpillars and nectar plants for butterflies throughout the United Kingdom. Ask your local nursery staff which ones are best suited for your area and climate.

Common Host Plants for Caterpillars:

Alder	Carrot	Grasses	Parsley	Spicebush
Anise	Ceanothus	Hackberry	Passion vine	Sunflower
Aspen	Cherry	Hollyhock	Plantain	Verbena
Aster	Citrus	Hops	Plum	Violet
Apple	Clover	Lilac	Pipevine	Wild sienna
Baby's tears	Coast live oak	Mallow	Poplar	Willow
Buckthorns	Cottonwood	Milkweed	Sassafras	
Cabbage	False indigo	Nasturtium	Sedges	
Canyon live oak	Fennel	Nettle	Snapdragon	

Common Nectar Plants for Butterflies:

Anise	Chrysanthemum	Hibiscus	Mustard	Sweet pepperbush
Aster	Clover	Hollyhock	Nasturtium	Sweet William
Bee balm	Coreopsis	Honeysuckle	Oregano	Thistle

Black-eyed susan	Cosmos	Impatiens	Parsley	Verbena
Blazing stars	Daisy	Joe-pye weed	Passion vine	Violet
Buckwheat	Daylily	Lantana	Peppergrass	Yarrow
Buddleia (butterfly bush)	Dogbane	Lavender	Phlox	Zinnia
Butterfly weed	Echium	Lilac	Purple coneflower	
Cardinal-flower	Firebush	Marigold	Queen Anne's lace	
Carrot	Fleabane	Mexican flame vine	Sumac	
Cassia	Heliotrope	Mint	Sunflower	

For more butterfly plants refer to: <http://www.butterfly-conservation.org/uploads/G4L-Butterflies.pdf>

Further reading: 'Golf Course Management for the benefit of Butterflies and Moths.' Refer to: http://www.butterfly-conservation.org/article/9/13/butterflies_moths_and_golf_courses_a_winning_combination_.html