

Butterfly Garden

Licking County Master Gardener Volunteers Learning Center for Gardening



Our butterfly garden is designed to attract butterflies to the Learning Garden and provide the plants butterflies need for every phase of their life cycle. Many butterfly species have a favorite host plant where they will lay their eggs so that the larval phase of their lifecycle, also known as a caterpillar, has plenty of nutritious food to eat. For example, Monarch butterflies are adapted to feed exclusively on the leaves of plants in the milkweed family. We have included “keystone plants,” native plants that host multiple butterfly and moth species. We also provide flowering plants in a variety of colors, heights and bloom times that provide plenty of nectar for adult butterflies throughout the growing season.

WHAT GROWS HERE

Asters	Lamb’s Ear (Stacey’s)
Black eyed Susan (Rudbeckia)	Liatris
Butterfly weed (Asclepius),	Obedient Plant
Milkweed	Russian Sage
Purple Coneflower (Echinacea)	Sea Holly
Yarrow	Zinnias
Blanket Flower (Gaillardia)	

HOW WE GROW IT

We chose a sunny corner on the south side of the Learning Garden to establish our Butterfly Garden. Butterflies need plenty of sunshine to warm their bodies for flight, and most of the plants that attract them are also sun-loving, requiring six or more hours per day of direct light. Butterflies must land in order to feed, so they prefer plants with either clusters of short tubular flowers or flowers with large, flat petals. Flowering plants are grouped together to help butterflies find them as they flit from patch to patch. The floor of our garden looks a bit untidy on purpose, to provide habitat for butterfly and moth species that pupate in last year’s plant debris and leaf litter.

Resources

Butterfly Garden Fact Sheet:
<https://woodlandstewards.osu.edu/sites/woodlands/files/imce/0012.pdf>