



BLACKWOOD'S
home of gardening

PLANTS THAT ATTRACT BUTTERFLIES TO THE GARDEN

Most plants with flowers attract butterflies to the garden. However, some seem to be more appealing than others. Some butterfly species don't feed on flower nectar, but rather on substances like decaying fruit. Many butterfly species have specific host plants that they lay their eggs on. Caterpillars (larvae) hatch and feed on the plant before pupating.

This often infuriates gardeners, as plants can be decimated by the voracious appetites of these creatures. The moral of the story is that in order for nature to prevail in suburban gardens, sacrifices have to be made. Refrain from using pesticides and allow the insect life to flourish. This environmentally friendly gardening method is being adopted more and more around the globe. Butterflies certainly add a special element to the garden, bringing joy and beauty to young and old.

This is just a very short list of some of the more common garden plants that are suitable for creating a butterfly garden in KwaZulu-Natal.

Key:

(E) = evergreen

(I) = indigenous

(S) = seed

(B) = bulb

(N) = nectar rich

(D) = deciduous

(F) = fruit

(C) = climber

(H) = herb

(T) = thorns

Annuals and perennials (low growing)

Ageratum houstonianum (floss flower) (E)

Antirrhinum majus (snapdragon) (E)

Asclepias tuberosa (butterfly weed) (E)
Asystasia gangetica (creeping foxglove) (E) (I)
Ceropegia woodii (string of hearts) (E) (I) (C)
Gaura lindheimeri (angels wings, butterfly flower) (E)
Huernia hystrix (toad plant) (E) (I)
Kniphofia uvaria (red hot poker) (ED) (I)
Lavandula stoechas (Spanish lavender) (E) – Note: most lavenders attract butterflies
Lobularia maritima (sweet alyssum) (E)
Pelargonium species and hybrids (geranium, malva) (E) (I)
Stapelia gigantea (carrion flower) (E) (I)
Stapelia leedertziae (red carrion flower) (E) (I)
Stenotaphrum secundatum (buffalo grass) (E) (I)
Tropaeolum majus (nasturtium) (E)
Watsonia hybrids and species (watsonia) (D) (I) (B)
Zea mays (maize or sweetcorn or mielies) (E)

Shrubs and Climbers (medium to tall growing)

Barleria obtusa (South Coast bush violet) (E) (I)
Bauhinia galpinii (pride of de Kaap) (ED) (I)
Buddleja davidii hybrids (butterfly bush) (ED)
Buddleja salviifolia (sagewood) (E) (I)
Chrysanthemoides monolifera (bush tick berry) (E) (I)
Cotyledon orbiculata (pig's ears) (E) (I)
Crassula ovata (jade plant) (E) (I)
Dombeya burgessiae (pink wild pear) (D) (I)
Dracaena alectrifolia (hookeriana) (large leaved dragon tree) (E) (I)
Ficus repens (pumila) (tickey creeper) (E) (C)
Freylinia tropica (honeybell bush) (E) (I)
Justicia bettonica (paper plume) (E) (I)
Leonotis leonurus (wild dagga) (E) (I)
Mackaya bella (river bells) (E) (I)
Melianthus major (honey flower) (E) (I)
Myrsine africana (wild myrtle) (E) (I)
Ochna serrulata (small leaved plane, mickey mouse bush) (ED) (I)
Passiflora edulis (granadilla) (E) (C) (F)
Pentas lanceolata hybrids (Egyptian star clusters) (E)

Plectranthus ecklonii (mintleaf) (E) (I) – Note: most Plectranthus attract butterflies
Plumbago auriculata (cape leadwort) (E) (I)
Protea cynaroides (king protea) (E) (I) - Note: most proteas attract butterflies
Protea repens (sugar bush) (E) (I)
Pychnostachys reticulata (slender pychnostachys) (E) (I)
Saccharum officinarum (sugar cane) (ED)
Salvia leucantha (Mexican sage) (E) - Note: most salvia types attract butterflies
Senecio barbertonicus (succulent senecio) (E) (I)
Senecio macroglossus (wax vine) (E) (I) (C)
Senecio tamoides (canary creeper) (E) (I) (C)
Serruria florida (blushing bride) (E) (I)
Tecoma capensis (Cape honeysuckle) (E) (I)

Trees (tall growing)

Albizzia adianthifolia (Natal flat crown) (D) (I)
Barringtonia racemosa (powder puff tree) (E) (I)
Bridelia micrantha (mitzeeri) (D) (I)
Calodendron capense (Cape chestnut) (ED) (I)
Celtis africana (white stinkwood) (D) (I)
Citrus - all species and hybrids (citrus trees) (E) (F)
Clausena anisata (horse wood) (E) (I)
Clerodendrum glabrum (tinderwood) (D) (I)
Croton gratissimus (lavender fever berry) (E) (I)
Dovyalis caffra (Kei apple) (ED) (I) (T) (F)
Englerophytum magalismontanum (Transvaal milk plum or stamvrug) (E) (I)
Faidherbia albida (Ana tree) (D) (I)
Ficus ingens (red rock fig) (D) (I)
Ficus natalensis (Natal wild fig) (ED) (I) Note: most Ficus or fig species attract butterflies
Ficus sur (Cape wild fig) (D) (I)
Grewia occidentalis (cross-berry) (E) (I)
Hibiscus tiliaceus (wild cotton tree) (E) (I)
Kiggelaria africana (wild peach) (E) (I)
Mangifera indica (mango) (E) (F)
Milletia grandis (umzimbeet) (D) (I)
Mimusops caffra (red milkwood) (E) (I)
Peltophorum africanum (weeping wattle) (D) (I)
Rhamnus prinoides (dogwood) (E) (I)

Schotia brachypetala (weeping Boer bean) (E) (I)
Senegalia (Acacia) nigrescens (knobthorn) (D) (I) (T)
Strelitzia nicolai (wild banana) (E) (I)
Syzygium cordatum (Umdoni tree or water berry) (E) (I)
Terminalia sericea (silver cluster leaf) (D) (I)
Trema orientalis (pigeonwood) (D) (I)
Trichilia emetica (Natal mahogany) (E) (I)
Vachellia (Acacia) karoo (sweet thorn) (D) (I) (T)
Vachellia (Acacia) sieberiana (paperbark) (D) (I) (T)
Vepris lanceolata (white ironwood) (E) (I)
Ziziphus mucronate (buffalo thorn) (ED) (I) (T)

Disclaimer:

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