

GARDENING TO ATTRACT BUTTERFLIES



TEXAS A&M
AGRI LIFE
EXTENSION

**Another Educational Outreach Program From the
Montgomery County Master Gardeners Association, Inc.**



WHY A BUTTERFLY GARDEN?

- **Butterflies are pollinators – we need them.**
- **Butterfly habitats are declining – they need us.
In the summer, the leading cause of decline of butterflies is lack of food sources or nectar.**
- **Butterfly gardens can help maintain or even increase butterfly populations.**
- **Butterfly gardens are beautiful and colorful.**
- **Let's learn about butterflies!**

STEPS TO ATTRACT BUTTERFLIES



- Provide both host plants for caterpillars and nectar plants for butterflies
- Provide a sunny location sheltered from strong wind
- Select plants that bloom different times of the years
- NEVER use herbicides and pesticides
- Provide a water source



CHRYSALIS OR COCOON

BUTTERFLY HAS CHRYSALIS



- **Butterfly Chrysalis** – caterpillar stops eating becomes pupa or chrysalis
- **Protective outer layer of butterfly pupa hard & shell like**



- **Moth Cocoon** – silk casting spun by moth around itself
- **Hard or soft**, opaque or transparent, depending on type of moth

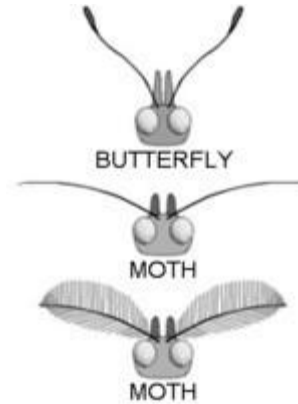


MOTH HAS A COCOON





BUTTERFLY OR MOTH?



(B. Newton, 2002)



- **Moth** – Antennae straight & **Bare** or **Feathery**,
Wings – **Wings** flat against surface or **tight along body**
Fly by **night**
- **Butterfly** – Antennae straight w **knob** at end
Wings rest with **wings closed & vertical on back**
Fly by **day**
- **Skipper** – Mistaken for a moth, flies in day
a butterfly, antenna club, wings vertical on back,
very **small, fast, erratic w darting flight**



WHY ARE WING PATTERNS DIFFERENT ON TOP & BOTTOM?

- Tiny scales on top and bottom of wings
- Underside when wings closed, muted colors for camouflage
- Top when wings open, colorful to attract a mate



LIFECYCLE OF THE BUTTERFLY



EGG



**LARVA
(CATERPILLAR)**



**PUPA
(CHRYSALIS)**



CATERPILLAR TO CHRYSALIS



TO BUTTERFLY

IN 2 WEEKS CATERPILLARS GROWS UP TO 2000 TIMES ORIGINAL SIZE



Photos by Chelsea Harem

HOST PLANTS PROVIDE FOOD SOURCES FOR CATERPILLARS

TO SURVIVE CATERPILLARS
MUST EAT SPECIFIC PLANTS

DUTCHMAN'S PIPEVINE
FOR PIPEVINE SWALLOWTAIL



MILKWEED
FOR MONARCHS
AND QUEENS



PASSION VINE
FOR GULF FRITILLARY



BLACK SWALLOWTAIL

DILL



PARSLEY



CHRYSALIS



CATERPILLAR



GULF FRITILLARY



PASSION VINE



CATERPILLAR



CHRYSALIS



MONARCH



CHRYSALIS



CATERPILLARS ON MILKWEED



PIPEVINE SWALLOWTAIL



**BABY BLACK
CATERPILLAR**



**RED
CATERPILLAR**



**DUTCHMEN'S
PIPEVINE**



CHRYSALIS



BUTTERFLIES

Nectar Sources



BUTTERFLY NUTRITION – NECTAR PLANTS

BUTTERFLIES DO NOT HAVE MOUTHS

THEY DRINK NECTAR WITH A PROBOSCIS



CORAL VINE BLACK SWALLOWTAIL BUTTERFLY



DURANTA

GULF FRITILLARY BUTTERFLY



GOLDENROD GULF FRITILLARY BUTTERFLIES



LANTANA COMMON BUCKEYE AND PAINTED LADY BUTTERFLIES



PENTAS TIGER SWALLOWTAIL



GIANT ZINNIAS ATTRACT A VARIETY OF BUTTERFLIES

HAIRSTREAK



MONARCH



GULF FRITILLARY



BUCKEYE



SKIPPER



SWALLOWTAIL



PLANTING DESIGN

- **Sunny area, with nearby shade**
- **Group colors together. Plant colors in blocks**
- **Use good soil**
- **Plant host plants for 3 types of butterflies**
- **Drip irrigation or soaker hoses are recommended**

- **Garden with levels**
 - **Low in front**
 - **Medium plants in the middle**
 - **Tall plants in back**

RESOURCES

- **“A Guide to Butterfly Gardening in Harris County”** <http://harris.agrilife.org/files/2011/05/bflygrdn.pdf>
- **“Butterfly Gardening for Texas”** by Geyata Ajilvsgi
- **“Butterflies of Houston and Southeast Texas”** by John & Gloria Tveten
- **“Butterflies of Southeast Texas and the Upper Texas Coast”** field guide by John and Gloria Tveten

CONTACT INFORMATION



- <http://aggieturf.tamu.edu/>
- <http://soiltesting.tamu.edu/>
- <http://montgomery.agrilife.org/>
- <http://www.mcmga.com/>
- <https://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/plantanswers/butterflies/>

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