

# Butterfly Garden



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Butterflies are among our most attractive wild creatures. We are lucky in Britain to have over 50 different species. However, many are becoming less common due to the loss of grassland, hedgerow, wetland and woodland habitats. Pesticides and herbicides have also taken their toll. With some careful planning, you can create a colourful, nectar-rich haven and watch as your fluttering friends come to visit.

## Attracting Butterflies To Feed

- Butterflies feed on sugar-rich nectar from flowers (see diagram below). To attract them, plant a selection of flowers to provide a variety of food sources for the different species.
- Butterflies are on the wing from March to October, so provide a variety of plants that will flower over spring, summer and autumn.
- Have enough of each type of flower to make a clear visible display and to give off a strong enough scent.
- Remember, butterflies love warmth and shelter, so plant your flowers in a suntrap, out of the wind.
- The best time to plant is in the spring.
- When planting, ensure the plants will have as much sunlight as possible. The best way to do this is to plant the tallest plants at the back and the shortest at the front (see diagram).

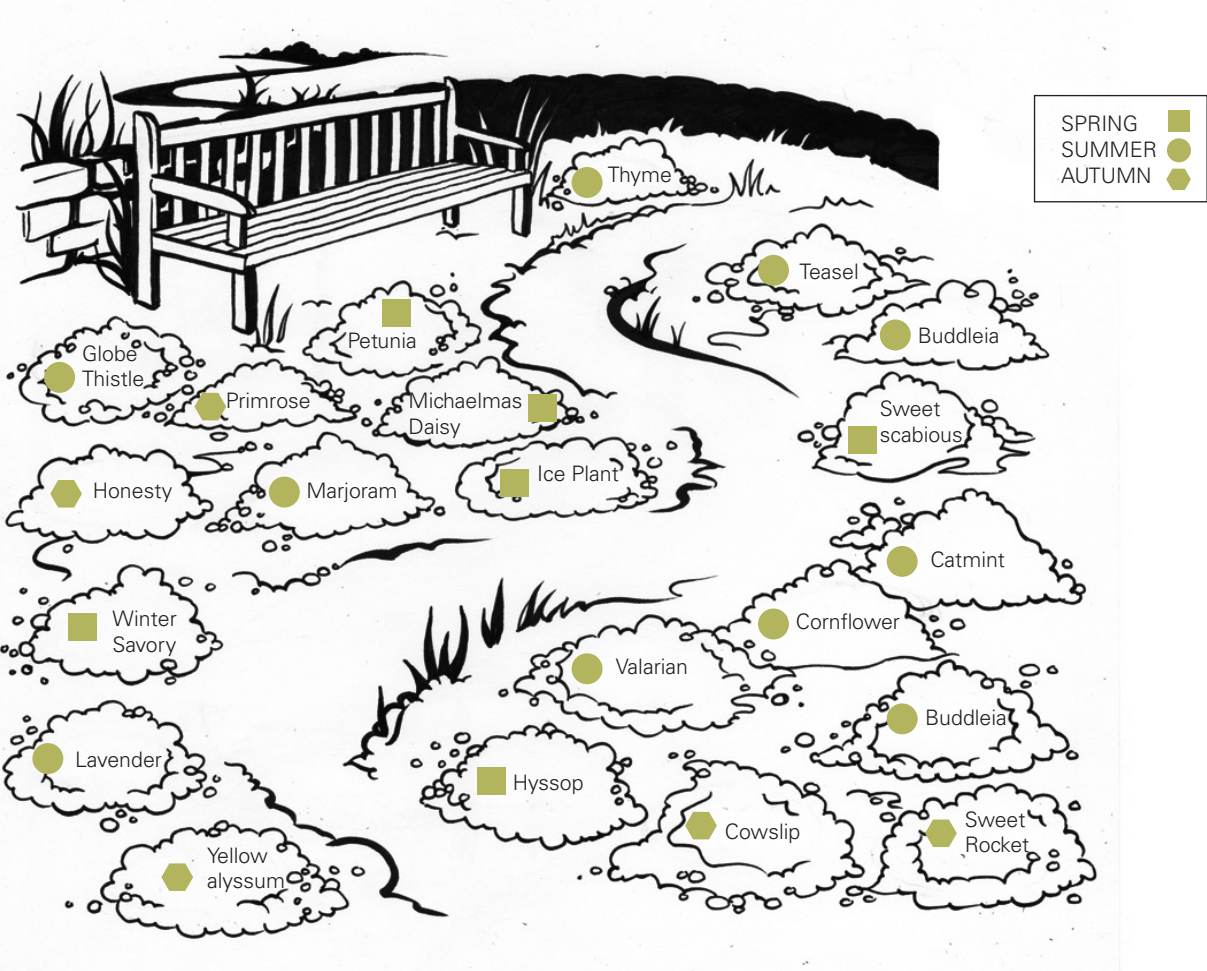
## Attracting Butterflies To Breed

- Butterflies are very fussy when it comes to egg-laying. The female will only lay eggs on a few plants, or even just one specific plant.
- Different species of caterpillar will eat different food plants.
- You can attract some of the most common species by providing their caterpillar’s food plant (see table below).
- Stinging nettles are the food plant of several different species of caterpillars, so it is well worth having a patch somewhere. If you are worried about them spreading and taking over then planting them in a container buried in the ground will help.
- Avoid using chemical pesticides to eliminate pests, as they will also kill caterpillars and butterflies.

## Food Plants For Butterflies And Caterpillars

BUTTERFLIES	FOOD PLANT OF CATERPILLAR
Meadow brown, hedge brown, wall brown, marbled white, large skipper, small skipper, speckled wood	Grasses - including flase brome, cocksfoot and Yorkshire fog
Small tortoiseshell, comma, red admiral, peacock	Stinging nettles
Green-veined white, orange tip	Lady’s smock, garlic mustard, hedge mustard
Large white, small white	Wild and cultivated cabbages
Holly Blue	Holly, ivy
Painted Lady	Thistles, burdock, nettles

## Planting A Butterfly Garden



## Fact

- The Swallowtail is the largest British butterfly and can only be seen in the Broads area. Swallowtail caterpillars depend on the plant milk parsley for food. If you are in the Broads in May or June keep your eyes open - you might be lucky enough to see one of the yellow and black butterflies fluttering up high!

## Contacts

- [www.insectlore-europe.com](http://www.insectlore-europe.com) provides all kinds of insect-related items, including bug boxes and butterfly raising kits.
- British Wildflowers is a local company, based in North Burlingham, that sells native wildflower plants: [www.wildflowers.co.uk](http://www.wildflowers.co.uk)



Marbled White Butterfly