

## Butterflies Depend on Native Plant Diversity

Many kinds of butterflies have very specific reproductive requirements, laying their eggs only on certain kinds of plants. Those plants then provide food for the butterfly larvae (caterpillars). Listed below are some of the native Texas plants which certain butterfly species require as larval food. If these plants are not present, these butterflies cannot reproduce. Other species of butterflies are not as specific as the ones listed below and may lay their eggs on several different plant species. Landowners and gardeners should always remember that well-managed, diverse plant communities play an essential role in the life cycle of butterflies as well as many other forms of wildlife.

### Larval Host Plants for Some Butterflies

#### Grasses and Grass-like Plants

Purpletop tridens  
Switchgrass  
Sideoats grama  
Dichanthelium sp  
Indiangrass  
Big bluestem  
Little bluestem  
Hairy tridens  
Cedar sedge  
Sacahuiste

#### Butterfly

Little glassywing  
Dotted skipper  
Orange skipperling  
Northern broken dash  
Georgia satyr  
Cobweb skipper  
Swarthy skipper  
Green skipper  
Apache skipper  
Sandia hairstreak

#### Forbs

Foxglove penstemon  
Twinleaf senna  
Noseburn  
Bloodberry rouge  
Hairy tubetongue  
Passion vine  
Dutchman's pipe  
Texas croton  
Partridge pea  
Scarlet globemallow

#### Butterfly

Dotted checkerspot  
Sleepy orange  
Amymone  
Goodson's hairstreak  
Vesta crescent  
Gulf fritillary  
Pipevine swallowtail  
Goatweed butterfly  
Little sulphur  
Small chekered skipper

#### Woody Plants

Guayacan  
Western soapberry  
Anisicanthus  
Mountain mahogany  
Old man's beard  
Kidneywood  
Ebony  
Pricklyash  
Mexican buckeye  
Granjeno  
Coyotillo  
Juniper  
Cenizo  
Mesquite  
Mistletoe  
Lechuguilla

#### Butterfly

Lyside  
Soapberry hairstreak  
Janais patch  
Behr's hairstreak  
Fatal metalmark  
Arizona skipper  
Large orange skipper  
Giant swallowtail  
Henry's elfin  
Empress Leilia  
Flashing astraptus  
Olive hairstreak  
Theona checkerspot  
Tailed orange  
Great blue hairstreak  
West Texas giant skipper

In addition to their need for larval food, adult butterflies use a large variety of flowering plants as their food source which is nectar. The following range plants offer some of the best nectar sources for butterflies:

### **Nectar Producing Plants Used by Adult Butterflies**

#### **Forbs**

Asters  
Coneflower  
Mistflower  
Joe-pye weed  
Sunflower  
Gayfeather  
Black-eye susan  
Goldenrod  
Cowpen daisy  
Frostweed  
Bush sunflower  
Orange zexmenia  
Rock daisy  
Lazy daisy  
Fleabane  
Ironweed  
Huisachedaisy  
Indian blanket  
Plains zinnia  
Thistle  
Groundsel  
Yarrow  
Coreopsis  
Greenthread  
Chocolate daisy  
Engelmannndaisy  
Milkweed  
Horsemint  
Skullcap  
Salvia  
Verbena  
Frogfruit  
Standing cypress  
Penstemon  
Pavonia  
Prairie clover  
Wild onion  
Indian mallow  
Globemallow  
Indian paintbrush  
Morning glory  
Flax  
Bluebonnet  
Evening primrose  
Gaura  
Bluecurls  
Clammyweed  
Wild buckwheat

#### **Woody**

Baccharis  
Kidneywood  
Hawthorne  
Shrubby boneset  
Rusty blackhaw  
Plum  
Black cherry  
Forestiera  
Western soapberry  
Bumelia  
Dewberry  
Roughleaf dogwood  
Buttonbush  
Hogplum  
Peachbrush  
Algerita  
Whitebrush  
Pricklyash  
Desert willow  
Rabbitbrush  
Pricklypear  
Sumac  
Willow  
Elderberry  
Coralberry  
Lantana  
Lechuguilla