



**NATIVE
SPECIES FOR
ATTRACTING
BUTTERFLIES**

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Attracting Butterflies

Australia plays host to around 400 species of butterflies and of these about half are endemic to our continent. The butterflies we see as mature adults do not live long, perhaps a few days or weeks but they form an important part in many food chains. Some species whose larvae feed on toxic plants are able to store these toxins in their systems making them unpalatable to their predators. These butterflies, which include the Wanderer, Crow, and Blue Tigers, may live for many months.

Birds, spiders, praying mantids and lizards eat the adult butterflies while parasitic flies and wasps will attack the pupae. Much of a butterfly's entire life is spent in early stages, as an egg, larva (caterpillar) or pupa (chrysalis.) Butterflies are 'solar-powered.' Their body temperature needs to be greater than the surrounding air to enable them to fly, and that is why they are often observed 'sun-basking.'

Butterflies are attracted to plants that are either a food source for the butterfly's larvae or plants whose flowers provide nectar on which the butterflies can feed. Each butterfly has only a few, specific plants that their caterpillars feed on. These are called the HOST PLANTS or FOOD PLANTS of the particular butterfly, not to be confused with the plants that the adult butterflies obtain nectar from. Some plants will address both these requirements (see note below table.)

Almost all butterflies, as adults, feed on nectar. It is not usually necessary to plant special plants to supply nectar, as the adult butterflies will usually use whatever is flowering at the time. Most butterflies are attracted to flowers in the warm colour spectrum, e.g. reds, pinks, blues and purples (*Melaleuca* and *Melicope* spp.) while some will favour blooms which match their own colours and body shapes. One example is the Small Grass-yellow (*Eurema smilax*) whose colour and wing shape are indistinguishable from the flowers of *Goodenia rotundifolia*, the groundcover from which it obtains nectar. Such camouflage will often protect butterflies from their many predators.

If you are trying to attract a certain butterfly to your garden by providing them with a food source the host plants should be positioned as far apart from each other as possible. This will encourage the female butterfly to fly from one end of your garden to the other. Research has shown that most butterflies stay near their host plants so when an adult butterfly needs the energy to fly around it will obtain it from the source of nectar nearest to it. Avoid using pesticides that will kill any butterfly larvae that are feeding in the garden and remember to provide water for adults in hot weather.

Native Plants that provide Nectar

<i>Angophora leiocarpa</i> (Rusty gum)	<i>Eupomatia laurina</i> (Bolwarra)
<i>Auranticarpa rhombifolia</i> (Hollywood)	<i>Flindersia</i> spp. (Native ashes)
<i>Arytera foveolata</i> (Pitted coogara)	<i>Goodenia</i> spp. (Goodenias)
<i>Asclepia curassavica</i> (Silkpod)	<i>Hoya australis</i> (Wax flower)
<i>Backhousia</i> spp. (Myrtles)	<i>Leptospermum</i> spp. (Tea trees)
<i>Banksia</i> spp. (Banksias)	<i>Lomandra</i> spp. (Mat rushes)
<i>Barklya syringifolia</i> (Crown of Gold)	<i>Macadamia</i> spp. (Qld nut trees)
<i>Commersonia fraseri</i> (Brush kurrajong)	<i>Melaleuca</i> spp. (Bottlebrush)
<i>Corymbia</i> spp. (Gums & native ashes)	<i>Melicope elleryana</i> , <i>M. microcorra</i> (Euodias)
<i>Cryptocarya triplinervis</i> (Brown laurel)	<i>Pandorea jasminiodes</i> (Bower of beauty)
<i>Decaspermum humile</i> (Silky myrtle)	<i>Parsonsia straminea</i> (Monkey rope)
<i>Elattostachys</i> spp. (Native tamarinds)	<i>Pavetta</i> (<i>Pavetta australiensis</i>)
<i>Eucalyptus</i> spp. (Gum trees)	<i>Xanthorrhoea</i> species (Grass trees)

BUTTERFLY**HOST (FOOD) PLANT**

AUSTRALIAN FRITILLARY (<i>Argyreus hyperbius</i>)	Purple violet (<i>Viola betonicifolia</i>)
AUSTRALIAN LEAFWING (<i>Doleschallia bisaltide</i>)	Love flower (<i>Pseuderanthemum variabile</i>)
BLUE ARGUS (<i>Junonia orithya</i>)	Love flower (<i>Pseuderanthemum variabile</i>) Karamat (<i>Hygrophila angustifolia</i>)
BLUE BANDED EGGFLY (<i>Hypolimnas alimena</i>)	Love flower (<i>Pseuderanthemum variabile</i>)
BLUE TIGER (<i>Tirumela hamata</i>)	Corky milk vine (<i>Secamone elliptica</i>) Mangrove milk vine (<i>Cynanchum carnosum</i>)
BLUE TRIANGLE (<i>Graphium sarpedon</i>)	Pink & white euodias* (<i>Melicope elleryana</i> ; <i>M. microcorra</i>) Natives laurels, eg Pigeonberry Ash (<i>Cryptocarya erythoxylon</i>) White Bollygum (<i>Neolitsea dealbata</i>) Oliver's sassafras (<i>Cinnamomum oliveri</i>)
BROWN SOLDIER (<i>Junonia hedonia</i>)	Karamat (<i>Hygrophila angustifolia</i>)
CAPER WHITE (<i>Belenois java</i>)	Native caper (<i>Capparis spp</i>)
CLEARWING SWALLOWTAIL (<i>Cressida Cressida</i>)	Pipeflower vines (<i>Aristolochia spp</i>)
COMMON CROW: OLEANDER BUTTERFLY (<i>Euploea core</i>)	Monkey rope* (<i>Parsonsia straminea</i>) Native figs (<i>Ficus coronata</i> , <i>F. fraseri</i> , <i>F. obliqua</i>) Wax flower* (<i>Hoya australis</i>) Currant Bush (<i>Carrisa ovata</i>)
COMMON EGGFLY (<i>Hypolimnas bolina</i>)	Love flower (<i>Pseuderanthemum variabile</i>)
COMMON GRASS YELLOW (<i>Eurema hecabe</i>)	Wattles (<i>the juvenile pinnate leaves of the Acacia species</i>) Coffee bush (<i>Breynia oblingifolia</i>)
COMMON/BLACK JEZABEL (<i>Delias nigrina</i>)	Mistletoes (<i>Amyema and Dendrophthoe spp.</i>)
COMMON PENCIL-BLUE (<i>Candalides absimilis</i>)	Tuckeroo (<i>Cupaniopsis anacardioides</i>) Tulipwood (<i>Harpulia pendula</i>) Native wisteria (<i>Callerya megasperma</i>)
DANAID EGGFLY (<i>Hypolimnas misippus</i>)	Love flower (<i>Pseuderanthemum variabile</i>)
DAINTY SWALLOWTAIL (<i>Papilio anactus</i>)	Round lime, Gympie lime (<i>Citris australis</i>) Native Lime (<i>Pittosporum spinescens</i>) & other citrus plants
EASTERN DUSK-FLAT (<i>Chaetocneme beata</i>)	Rainforest trees (<i>Cryptocarya, Litsea and Neolitsea spp.</i>) White Alder (<i>Callicoma serratifloia</i>)
EVENING BROWN (<i>Melanitis leda</i>)	Kangaroo grass (<i>Themeda australis</i>) Blady grass (<i>Imperata cylindrical</i>)
GLASSWING (<i>Acraea andromacha</i>)	Red passion flower (<i>Passiflora aurantia</i>) Corky passionvine (<i>Passiflora suberosa</i>)
IMPERIAL HAIRSTREAK (<i>Jalmenus evagoras</i>)	Wattles (<i>Acacia spp.</i>)

LESSER WANDERER (<i>Danaus chrysippus</i>)	Mangrove milk vine (<i>Cynanchum carnosum</i>) Silkpod* (<i>Asclepia curassavica</i>)
LEMON MIGRANT (<i>Catopsilia Pomona</i>)	Leichardt Bean (<i>Cassia brewsteri</i>)
MEADOW ARGUS (<i>Junonia villida</i>)	Goodenias (<i>Goodenia spp.</i>)* Paper daisy (<i>Xerochrysum bracteatum</i>)
ORANGE PALM-DART (<i>Cephrenes augiades</i>)	Piccabeen palm (<i>Archontophoenix cunninghamiana</i>) Cabbage palm (<i>Livistonia spp.</i>)
ORCHARD SWALLOWTAIL (<i>Papipio aegeus</i>)	Native ashes (<i>Flindersia spp.</i>) Round lime Gympie lime (<i>Citris australis</i>) Native Lime (<i>Pittosporum spinescens</i>) & other citrus plants
PAINTED LADY (<i>Vanessa kershawi</i>)	Paper Daisy (<i>Xerochrysum bracteatum</i>)
PURPLE MOONBEAM (<i>Phyliris innotatus</i>)	Sandpaper figs (<i>Ficus coronata, F. opposita</i>)
REGENT SKIPPER (<i>Euschemon rafflesia</i>)	Tetra Beech (<i>Wilkea heugeliana</i>) Large-leaved Wilkea (<i>Wilkea macrophylla</i>)
RICHMOND BIRDWING (<i>Ornithoptera richmondii</i>)	Birdwing vine (<i>Pararistolochia pravenosa</i>) and other pipeflowers (<i>A. Tagala, A. Delantha</i>) <i>Note: The introduced 'Dutchman's Pipe Vine (Aristolochia elegans)</i> <i>will kill the larvae that feed on it.</i>
SCARLET JEZEBEL (<i>Delias argenthona</i>)	Mistletoes (<i>Amyena and Dendrophthoe spp.</i>)
SIX LINE-BLUE (<i>Nacaduba Berenice</i>)	Alectryons (<i>Alectryon spp.</i>) Tuckeroo (<i>Cupaniopsis anacardioides</i>) Pitted cooyara (<i>Arytera foveolata</i>)
SMALL GREEN-BANDED BLUE (<i>Psychonotis caelius</i>)	Pink Ash (<i>Alphitonia petriei</i>) Red Ash; Soap bush (<i>Alphitonia excelsa</i>)
SPECKLED LINE-BLUE (<i>Catopyrops florinda</i>)	Native mulberry (<i>Pipturus argenteus</i>) Poison peach (<i>Trema tomentosa</i>)
SPLENDID OCHRE (<i>Trapezities symmomus</i>)	Matrushes (<i>Lomandra longifolia, L. hystrix, etc.</i>)
TAILED EMPEROR (<i>Polyura pyrrhus sempronius</i>)	Fern-leafed Wattles (<i>Acacia irrorata, A. deanii, A. glaucocarpa,</i> <i>A. loroloba, A. leucoclada</i>) Flame Tree (<i>Brachychiton acerifolius</i>)
TINY GRASS-BLUE (<i>Zizula hylax</i>)	Karamat (<i>Hygrophila augustifolia</i>)
VARIED SWORD GRASS- BROWN (<i>Tisiphone abeona</i>)	Stocky saw sedge (<i>Gahnia sieberiana</i>) Swamp saw sedge (<i>Gahnia clarkei</i>)
WANDERER:MONARCH (<i>Danaus plexippus</i>)	Silkpod* (<i>Asclepia curassavica</i>) Cotton bushes (<i>Gomphocarpus spp.</i>)
WHITE-BANDED PLANE; COMMON AEROPLANE (<i>Phaedyma shepherdii</i>)	Black booyong (<i>Argyrodendron actinophyllum</i>) Flame tree (<i>Brachychiton acerifolius</i>)

* Also bear flowers that provide nectar for the butterfly

This information covers the area from the Sunshine Coast of Queensland to the Northern Rivers District of NSW