Lifecycle of the Fluttering Set
Most butterflies look a lot like their parents — just smaller. Not butterflies. They have four completely different life stages: egg, larva, pupa, and adult.

During the larval stage (often called caterpillar), the budding butterfly mostly not leaves — and sometimes from just one plant or group of plants. Adults are often less fuzzy, but still have their preferences. Therefore the kind of plants in your garden will also determine what kind of butterflies you grow.

Adults: Actual lifespan can vary, depending on species and weather conditions. However, once the butterfly emerges and mate, the female lays eggs and the cycle begins again.

Egg: 5-10 days. The female butterfly will attach the eggs to plants that will serve as food for the growing larva.

Larvae: 2-4 weeks. The larva, or caterpillar, has a hearty appetite for leaves, often of a specific plant or group of plants. As the larva eats, it outgrows its skin and sheds it for a new one. This will happen four to six times.

Pupa: About 10-15 days (in warm weather — but many species spend the winter in this form, emerging as butterflies in the spring). The pupa or chrysalis is a very quiet stage during which the caterpillar shape dissolves and the butterfly shape is formed. The pupa often attach themselves to twigs or leaves and may take on the color of the surrounding plant material.

Creating Butterfly Gardens

U.S. Department of Agriculture • Natural Resources Conservation Service • California

Butterflies in the Garden

Gardens are special places — full of color and fragrance. With just a little planning, they can also be full of movement and life, inviting creatures to join the beautiful collection of plants. Butterflies add welcome and elegant dashes of color to almost any garden — and you can easily accommodate them in your own backyard.

A sunny spot that offers some protection from the wind is a good place to start. Then begin planning a collection of plants that grow well in your area and will provide nectar throughout the season. To be a full-service butterfly hotel, your garden will also need food for caterpillars — plants which may be trees or weeds or may not prove as decorative as others in your garden. Homes and schools near woods or meadows get the edge here — but even urban dwellers may find ways to add some of these plants to the garden.

A little attention to moisture (many butterflies like to drink from puddles or moist soil) and insecticides (just say "no") is also appreciated.

How well do you know Butterflies?
True or False:
1) Butterflies lived at the same time as dinosaurs
2) Butterflies, and their cousins the moths, are the largest group of insects
3) Humane can see more colors than butterflies
4) The white "eye spots" on butterfly wings are created by pockets of light reflecting air
5) A butterfly's entire body is covered with scales, even their feet
6) Butterflies have six feet — and they can taste with them
7) Most butterflies migrate to escape the winter

Making Your Yard a Home
Butterflies will think your yard looks like home if you consider and provide for these needs:
1) Nectar for adults — found in many flowering plants
2) Plants for caterpillars — they need leafy foods, different than the adults
3) Shelter — they can fly and feed better without being blown about
4) Sun — to warm their wings for smooth flying, and also to feed the plants that feed them.

Citizen Core is Critical
Your backyard is yours — but you may be happy to share it with wildflowers, butterflies, birds and other creatures by providing habitat, such as the plants discussed on these pages. Parks and forests are wonderful places to visit, but birds, fish, insects, plants and other wildlife depend on the generosity of those who own and manage private lands too. Private places like California's farms and ranches, and private places like your backyard serve as refuges and caring about conservation — and for being part of the habitat solution.
Choosing Nectar Plants: To provide for season-long butterfly visits, choose a mix of nectar-rich species, with blooming times that run from spring to fall. Both annuals and perennials are possibilities. Remember to plan for the unique height (taller ones go in back) and color combinations that each type of plant will add to the garden. Below is a partial list of plants that do well in many areas of California, but check with your local nursery or Cooperative Extension Service Master Gardener for the best choices in your area.

I. Annuals
Ageratum (Ageratum houstonianum)
Cosmos (Cosmos bipinnatus)
Lantana (Lantana camara)
Lunaria (Lunaria annua)
Marigold (Tagetes patula)
Flowering tobacco (Nicotiana spp.)
Petunia (Petunia x hybrida)
Verbena (Verbena spp.)
Zinnia (Zinnia elegans)

II. Perennials
Aster / Michaelmas Daisy (Aster spp.)
Bee balm (Monarda didyma)
Black-eyed Susan (Rudbeckia spp.)
Butterfly bush (Buddleja spp.)
Butterfly weed (Asclepias tuberosa)
Cape Plumbago (Plumbago auriculata)
Cuphea (Cuphea hyssopifolia)
Creosote bush (Larrea tridentata)
Crescents (Crescents spp.)
Chives (Allium schoenoprasum)
Coreopsis (Coreopsis spp.)
Gaillardia (Gaillardia grandiflora)
Lavender (Lavandula angustifolia)
Liatris (Liatris spp.)
Phlox (Phlox spp.)
Purple Coneflower (Echinacea purpurea)
Scabiosa (Scabiosa atropurpurea)
Yarrow (Achillea filipendula)

Some of California's Many Butterfly Species

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Favorite Larvae Foods:</th>
<th>Adult food:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asian Swallowtail</td>
<td>Sweet formal, citrus trees</td>
<td>Nectar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Tiger Swallowtail</td>
<td>Aspens, poles, willows, alders, ashes</td>
<td>Nectar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chequered White</td>
<td>Mustards</td>
<td>Nectar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sara Orange Tip</td>
<td>Mustards</td>
<td>Nectar/pudding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alfalfa Sulphur</td>
<td>Alfalfa, vetches, clover</td>
<td>Nectar/pudding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dog Face</td>
<td>Indigo bush, prairie clover</td>
<td>Nectar/pudding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purplefish Copper</td>
<td>Dock, knaweed</td>
<td>Nectar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mormon Metalmark</td>
<td>Wild buckwheat</td>
<td>Nectar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brown Elfin</td>
<td>Blueberry, bearberry</td>
<td>Nectar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gray Hairstreak</td>
<td>Legumes, mailows, others</td>
<td>Nectar/pudding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring Azure</td>
<td>Dogwood, wild cherry</td>
<td>Nectar/pudding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silvery Blue</td>
<td>Lupine, other legumes</td>
<td>Nectar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Tailed Blue</td>
<td>Vetches, other legumes</td>
<td>Nectar/pudding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shout Butterfly</td>
<td>Hackberry</td>
<td>Nectar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mourning Cloak</td>
<td>Willow, aspens, elms, birch, hackberry</td>
<td>Nectar/pudding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Millhert's Truthsotshell</td>
<td>Nettles</td>
<td>Nectar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buckeye</td>
<td>Plants, snapdragons</td>
<td>Nectar/pudding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Painted Lady</td>
<td>Thistles, composites, butterfly</td>
<td>Nectar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red Admiral</td>
<td>Hollyhocks, berage</td>
<td>Nectar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Coast Lady</td>
<td>Nettles</td>
<td>Nectar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sister</td>
<td>Mallow, nettles</td>
<td>Nectar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Longnin's Admiral</td>
<td>Oaks</td>
<td>Nectar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ringlet</td>
<td>Willows, aspens, cottonwoods, chokecherry</td>
<td>Nectar/pudding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monarch</td>
<td>Grasses</td>
<td>Nectar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queen</td>
<td>Milkweeds</td>
<td>Nectar</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

California Caterpillar Cuisine
(aka foods for butterfly larvae)

- Aspen, cottonwood (Populus spp.)
- Birch (Betula spp.)
- Blueberry (Vaccinium spp.)
- Cabbage, broccoli (Brassica spp.)
- Cherry (Prunus spp.)
- Citrus (Citrus spp.)
- Dogwood (Cornus spp.)
- Elm (Ulmus spp.)
- False indigo (Amorpha spp.)
- False nettle (Boehmeria spp.)
- Grasses, sedges
- Hackberry (Celtis spp.)
- Knotweed (Polygonum spp.)
- Lupine (Lupinus spp.)
- Mallow (Malva spp.)
- Marigold (Tagetes spp.)
- Meadowfoam (Spirocoma spp.)
- Milkweed (Asclepias spp.)
- Nettle (Urtica spp.)
- Oak (Quercus spp.)
- Parsley (Petroselinum crispum)
- Passionflower (Passiflora spp.)
- Plantain (Plantago spp.)
- Snapdragon (Antirrhinum spp.)
- Sorrel, dock (Rumex spp.)
- Sweet fennel (Foeniculum vulgare)
- Thistle (Cirsium spp.)
- Vetch (Vicia spp.)
- Willow (Salix spp.)
- Winter cress (Barbarea spp.)

Hold that Bud!
Even the most subtle boundary line (Tennessee's official) can have a place in a butterfly garden, offering both food for butterflies and a great excuse for those who haven't found this time to discourage them.

However the Blackenson's blue (Anise hybrida) is also very attractive to butterflies—and to most gardeners as well.