



# Creating a Butterfly Garden



Did you know you can help with pollination by creating a Butterfly Garden at your school, in your backyard, or even on your apartment or condo balcony?

## Here's what you'll need to get started:

**Find a sunny space that also has shelter.** Butterflies and the plants will need lots of sun—at least six hours of sun every day. You don't have to have lots of space. A small space can work as long as there is room to grow the needed plants. Butterflies will also need some type of shelter, so they don't have to fight the wind. You can use plant material or a trellis to create a wind barrier.

**Make sure the soil is ready and that your garden has a water source.** You will want to choose plants that are native to your area. Check your local library or your state's wildlife federation for a list of native plants that attract butterflies. The type of soil and amount of water needed will depend on the plants in your garden.

Add resting spots and places where water can puddle for the butterflies. You can put flat stones in your garden to give butterflies a place to rest their wings and rest in the sun. Butterflies will also want wet, sandy spots where they can drink water and get minerals from the damp soil. Some gardeners add sand to a bird bath—or you can just make sure there are areas for mud puddles in your garden!

**Provide lots of butterfly food!** Nectar plants are an essential food source for butterflies (and other pollinators). It's important that you include plants that will bloom from early spring to late fall in your garden so butterflies will have enough food during their breeding and migration process. Your garden should include at least three nectar plants native to your region, and having plants in a variety of sizes, shapes and colors will attract more pollinators.

**Keep your garden safe.** You should never use insecticides, chemical pesticides, herbicides or include plants that have been treated with chemicals. These chemicals can kill butterflies and other pollinators. Check with your local library for tips on organic gardening to keep your butterfly garden safe for your pollinating visitors.

**Then, watch your butterflies arrive!** You'll be able to watch the butterflies sip nectar from your garden's flowers, gather in the water puddles or bird bath, and rest in the sun.

*Compliments of*

