

Butterfly Garden



Location

The Butterfly Garden is located in front of the Tanner Environmental Education Center, which is just north of the Kerr Dam and next to Tugboat Dan.

History of the Garden

In 2002, the gardens in front of the Tanner Environmental Center were planned and planted by the South Hill Garden Club. As the plants grew, it was observed that a good number of butterflies were attracted to the Butterfly Bushes during the heat of the summer and into the autumn months. In keeping with the Center’s mission of environmental education, it was decided to do a little rearrangement of the gardens and

plant some additional “butterfly friendly” plants. This was begun in the spring of 2007.

What you now see is just the beginning of our butterfly garden. The center of the garden has been planted with butterflies in mind. This fall, the area on the left – as you face the Tanner Center – will be rearranged and planted with butterfly friendly plants.

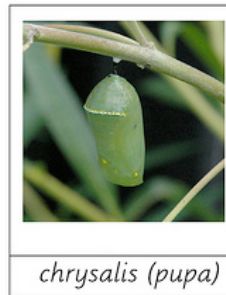
A water source for the butterflies and some interpretive signs will complete the Butterfly Garden.

Planning a Butterfly Garden

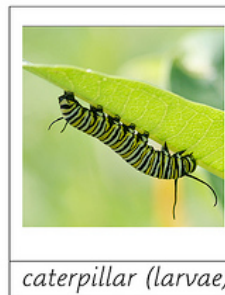
A butterfly garden should take into consideration the life cycles of butterflies, from egg to larva (caterpillar) then to pupa (chrysalis) and finally a butterfly.



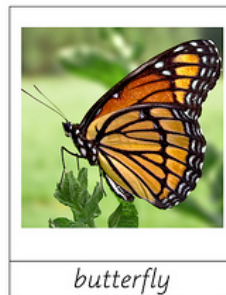
butterfly egg



chrysalis (pupa)



caterpillar (larvae)



butterfly

Certain plants can serve as hosts for early stages of the butterfly’s life cycle, while other’s serve as cover and nectar sources. Butterflies also require nearby “puddles” with open areas so they can congregate and extract salts and minerals from the water.

Another consideration for attracting butterflies to a garden is to provide nectar filled flowers through the spring, summer and fall.

Notice that the taller plants are planted in the center, while the shorter plants, such as the Moss Phlox are planted on the perimeter. This makes it easier for butterflies to locate the flowers and easier for us to view the butterflies.

Host Plants

Host plants provide food and shelter for butterfly eggs, caterpillars and pupa. Butterflies tend to be quite selective when choosing their host plant. For instance, the Eastern Swallowtail prefers Sycamore or Willow trees, while the Monarch likes Milkweed.

So far, we have the following host plants planted in our Butterfly Garden:

| <u>Plant Host</u> | <u>Butterfly Type</u> |
|-------------------|------------------------|
| Butterfly Weed | Monarch |
| Parsley | Black Swallowtail |
| Choke Cherry | Two-Tailed Swallowtail |
| Oak | Red-Spotted Purple |
| Willow | Eastern Swallowtail |

Nectar Plants

Nectar is the food source of the adult Butterfly and that is what attracts these magnificent insects. Almost any flower in which the butterfly's proboscis can reach in and extract nectar will work. However, plants that have multiple florets producing abundant nectar are perfect for attracting and keeping butterflies in the garden.

To make it easier for Butterflies to locate flowering plants, it is best to plant groups of similar plants/colors together.

Among our nectar plants are:

Butterfly Weed
Butterfly Bush
Purple Coneflower
Moss Phlox
Black-eyed Susan
Golden Fleece
Goldenrod



Interesting Butterfly Facts

1. There are only a few differences between butterflies and moths. For one, a butterfly is active in the day, while a moth is active at night. Also, the end of the butterfly's antenna has a "club", while the moth's doesn't.
2. On average, an adult butterfly only lives for two weeks, though some species can live several months.
3. The taste buds for most butterflies' are on their legs!
4. Butterflies do not have ears, but they have motion sensors on their antenna.
5. There are over 750 species of Butterflies & 11,000 species of moths in North America

References

How to make butterfly gardens:
<http://www.ca.uky.edu/entomology/entfacts/ef006.asp>

Children's butterfly site:
<http://bsi.montana.edu/web/kidsbutterfly/>

Butterfly education:
<http://www.enchantedlearning.com/subjects/butterfly/>

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BUTTERFLY GARDEN

at the

Tanner
Environmental
Education Center



John H. Kerr Dam
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