

# Butterfly Gardening

## Hints and tips for attracting butterflies to the garden

Butterflies are some of Britain's most colourful wildlife. Much loved by children and adults, their high dependency on a limited number of plants makes them especially vulnerable in a changing landscape where habitats and food plants are being lost. This has unfortunately led to the extinction of some species, whilst others are in decline.

However, the garden can offer these enigmatic creatures real hope if a variety of plants are grown in sunny, sheltered spots. They can also be helped further and encouraged to stay longer if there are a few 'food plants' for their young.

To help you create a colourful border attractive to butterflies we have provided a few hints and tips and a list of suitable plants. Many of the plants will also be attractive to bees and other insects. These in turn will provide natural food for birds and bats, especially if a few night-scented plants are included for nocturnal moths.

### Planning a Butterfly Border

#### *Select a site*

Choose a sunny, sheltered spot. Butterflies need the sun to warm them up and get them going and enjoy basking in the sun. They will not visit flowers in the shade.

#### *Choose your plants*

Pick some that flower in spring, summer and autumn to provide a continuous supply of nectar. Old-fashioned varieties tend to be more nectar-rich, whilst double flowers and new hybrids have very little.

#### *Caterpillars*

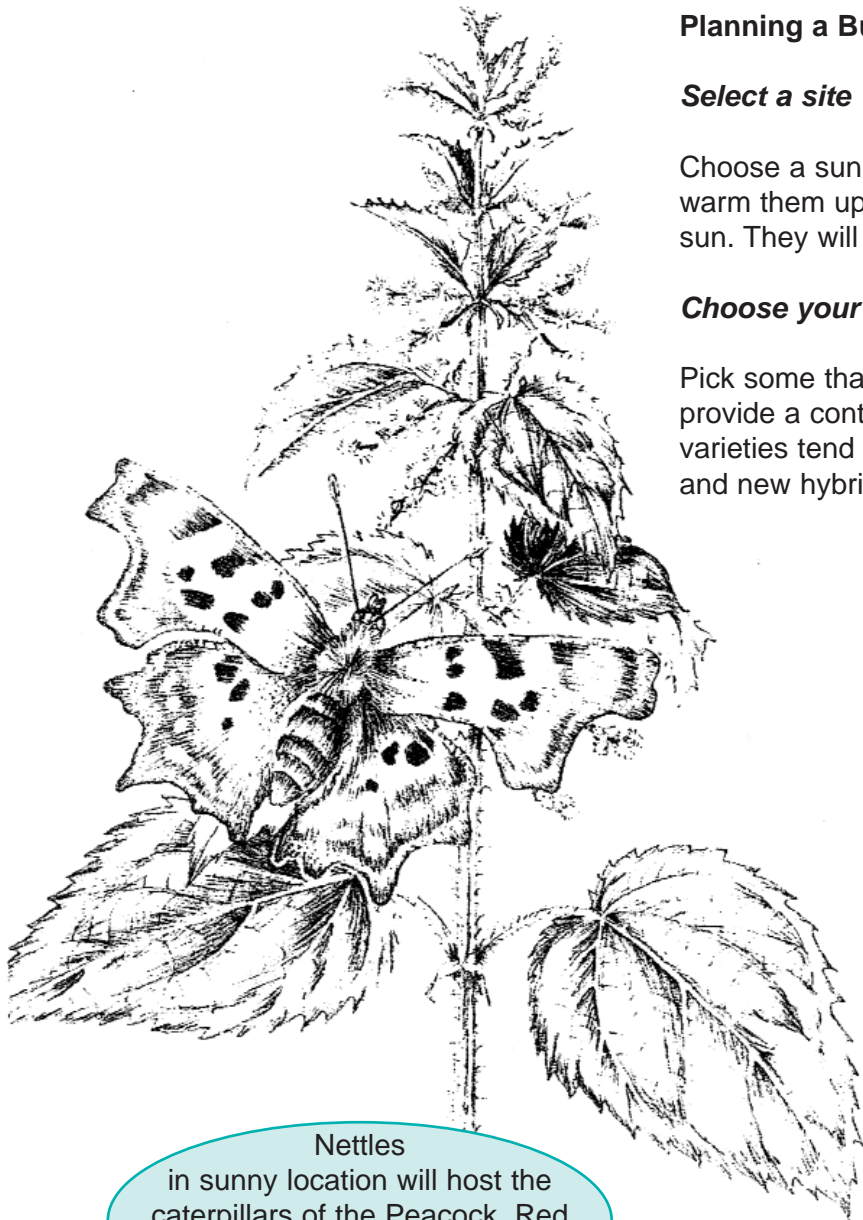
Include some food plants for the young; without these butterflies will continue to decline.

#### *Hibernation*

Thick vegetation will provide cover for butterflies that hibernate in winter.

#### *Colour*

Plant groups of the same species in 3s or 5s. This will give a strong visual sign to passing butterflies and better scent.



Nettles  
in sunny location will host the  
caterpillars of the Peacock, Red  
Admiral, Small Tortoiseshell  
and Comma.



## Nectar-rich plants for Butterflies

### Spring flowering

Alyssum  
Cowslip  
Forget-me-not  
Polyanthus  
Grape hyacinth  
Honesty  
Primrose

### Summer flowering

Hyssop  
Wallflower  
Lavender  
Lady's smock  
Marigolds  
Field scabious  
Verbena  
Thyme  
Marjoram  
Goldenrod  
Buddleia

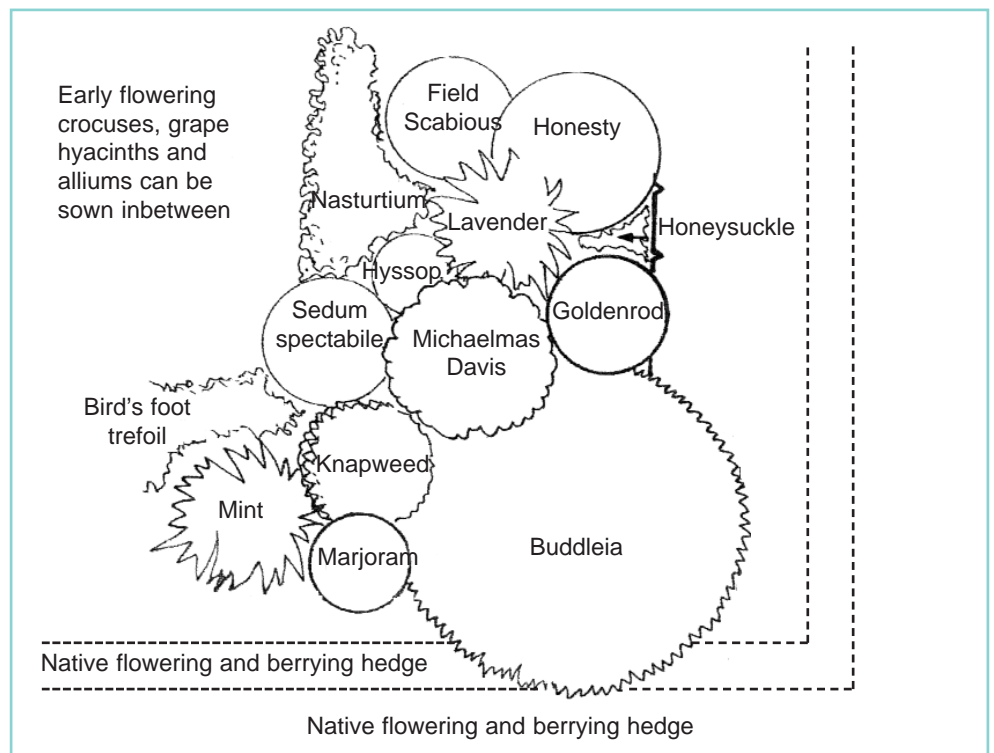
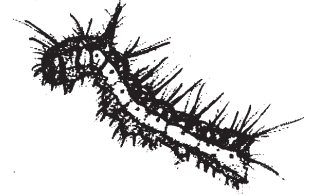
### Autumn flowering

Lavender  
Fuchsia  
Ice plant  
Russian sage  
Michaelmas daisies  
Ivy

Avoid using pesticides in the garden. They can kill caterpillars

## Plants for breeding butterflies

Species	Plants preferred
Peacock	Common nettle
Small tortoiseshell	Common nettle
Comma	Common nettle
Red admiral	Common nettle
Large skipper	Cock's foot, False brome
Small skipper	Yorkshire fog
Dingy skipper	Common bird's foot trefoil
Large white	Cabbage family, Nasturtium, Wild mignonette
Small white	Cabbage family, Nasturtium, Hedge mustard, Garlic mustard
Green-veined white	Cabbage family, Cuckoo flower, Charlock, Nasturtium
Orange tip	Cuckoo flower, Garlic mustard
Small copper	Common sorrel, Sheep's sorrel
Common blue	Common bird's foot trefoil
Painted lady	Thistles, Common nettle
Wall	False brome, Cock's foot, Yorkshire fog, Wavy hair grass
Meadow brown	Fescue species, Meadow-grass, Bents
Ringlet	Cock's foot, False brome, Tufted hair-grass, Common couch



## Nectar-Rich Wildflowers for butterflies

Lady's bedstraw	Knapweed
Betony	Lady's smock/Cuckoo flower
Bird's foot trefoil	Common mallow
Bluebell	Corn marigold
Bugle	Oxlip
Meadow buttercup	Purple loosestrife
Red campion	Ragged robin
Red clover	St John's wort
Wild primrose	Field scabious
Cowslip	Teasel
Ox-eye daisy	Thrift
Dog violet	Wild thyme
Feverfew	Common toadflax
Harebell	Viper's bugloss
Herb robert	Yarrow



## Hibernation

White, Browns & Blues over-winter as chrysalis.

Painted Lady & Red Admiral migrate to Europe.

Brimstone, Peacock and Small Tortoiseshell hibernate in shrubs and buildings as adults.