

How to Encourage Butterflies to Come to Your Yard

Just like children, we are always a little more excited about life when we see a butterfly enjoying the day with us! According to the non-profit National Gardening Association, there are some things that we can do to encourage these creatures to spend more time in our yards!

Three basic things they love are lots of sun, protection from the wind, and nectar flowers for food. So the ideal place to plant your “butterfly garden” is on the south side of a building that gets at least six hours of sun a day and is protected from the wind.

Your garden of nectar flowers should be brightly colored and sweet-smelling and can include such flowers as marigolds, asters, zinnias, lavender, or black-eyed Susans. The National Gardening editors also recommend that these easy to grow flowers be planted in clumps, instead of individually, to increase their attraction to visitors. This is ideal for situations of limited space, when a simple window box or planter pots will work just fine. If the butterflies don't come, we will still have the flowers to enjoy!

Other things you can try to make your garden more effective include:

- Don't use any kind of pesticide in your butterfly garden
- Place dark stones in and around the garden to provide warm spots for your guests to enjoy the warm sun
- Sink a shallow container, filled with sand, in your garden to resemble a “puddle” to get a real party going!

There are many interesting and useful website links in the Home and Garden Section of Vital Connections <<http://www.vitalco.net>>. The information in this article came from the National Gardening Association, where you can find answers to all your gardening questions, how-to projects and even on-line gardening courses. Here's another tip: How to get rid of burrowing rodents? Spray your lawn with a repellent made from the oil of castor beans to safely discourage them. It seems they hate the smell.

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