



Factsheet: Butterfly gardening

Butterflies are beautiful creatures and it is rewarding to encounter them in your garden. Following a few easy steps will increase the attractiveness of your garden to local butterflies:

1. Cater for each stage of the butterfly life cycle. Most caterpillars require a specific food plant. For example, the caterpillars of the Australian Painted Lady feed on the soft green parts of Everlasting Daisies. Adult butterflies feed on the nectar-producing flowers of many species. In your garden, provide plants that bloom at different times of the year and have different heights and flower colours.
2. Provide a place to rest on cool, cloudy or rainy days, such as trees, shrubs and logs. These also provide protection against predatory birds and reptiles and shelter from harsh sunlight and strong winds.
3. Provide some open space so that butterflies can roam around and enjoy the sunshine. Butterflies are cold-blooded animals and need the energy from the sun to carry out their daily activities. They only fly when the temperature is over 15°C. A group of flat rocks in a protected area of the garden can serve as a basking place where butterflies will sunbake on sunny days.
4. Provide a damp or muddy area where butterflies can obtain water and minerals.
5. Don't use insecticides. These will kill butterflies and caterpillars.

It is a good idea to find out which butterflies are indigenous to your area. It is best to attract local species. It's also good to start by attracting species that are common. To find out what is common in your area keep an eye on what's in your neighbour's yard or local parks.

Once the garden is in place and the plants are flowering, make sure you take the time to observe what butterflies your garden is attracting and enjoy their activity. Some butterflies you might see in Adelaide are:

- Australian Admiral (*Vanessa itea*)
- Australian Painted Lady (*Vanessa kershawi*)
- Common Brown (*Heteronympha merope*)
- Cabbage White (*Pieris rapae*)
- Tailed Emperor Butterfly (*Polyura pyrrhus sempronius*)
- Wanderer Butterfly (*Danaus plexippus plexippus*)

find out more at: www.unisa.edu.au/barbarahardy

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