

Native Plants that are Host Plants for Butterfly and Moth Caterpillars

Host plants are the plants on which butterflies and moths lay their eggs. The emerging caterpillars use these plants for food. Some caterpillars are generalists and can eat many kinds of foliage, but most are adapted to feed only on certain plant species. It is important to include in your garden plants that provide food for caterpillars as well as plants that supply nectar for adult butterflies and moths. Please note that this is by no means a definitive list; it is a sampling of native plants that host caterpillars. Doug Tallamy's books, which include *Bringing Nature Home* and *Nature's Best Hope*, offer detailed information on host plants. *The Living Landscape*, which he co-authored with Rick Darke, contains tables which give detailed information about the ecological benefits of many plants including whether they host caterpillars.

Trees and Shrubs

Botanical Name	Common Name	Butterflies and Moths which use host plant
<u><i>Acer rubrum</i></u>	Red Maple	Hosts nearly 300 species of caterpillars
<i>Acer saccharum</i>	Sugar Maple	Hosts nearly 300 species of caterpillars
<u><i>Alnus serrulata</i></u>	Smooth Alder	Hosts 255 species of caterpillars
<u><i>Amelanchier canadensis</i></u>	Serviceberry	Hosts 124 species of caterpillars
<u><i>Arctostaphylos uva-ursi</i></u>	Bearberry	Brown Elfin, Hoary Elfin
<u><i>Aronia arbutifolia</i></u>	Red Chokeberry	Hosts 29 species of caterpillars
<u><i>Aronia melanocarpa</i></u>	Black Chokeberry	Hosts 29 species of caterpillars
<u><i>Asimina triloba</i></u>	Pawpaw	Zebra Swallowtail
<u><i>Betula</i> spp.</u>	Birch species	Hosts over 400 species of caterpillars
<u><i>Carpinus caroliniana</i></u>	Ironwood	Hosts 68 species of caterpillars
<i>Carya</i> spp.	Hickory (native)	Hosts 235 species of caterpillars
<u><i>Ceanothus americanus</i></u>	New Jersey Tea	Hosts 43 species of caterpillars
<u><i>Celtis occidentalis</i></u>	Hackberry	Tawny Emperor, Hackberry Emperor, American Snout, Mourning Cloak, Question Mark
<u><i>Cercis canadensis</i></u>	Eastern Redbud	Henry's Elfin
<u><i>Chionanthus virginicus</i></u>	Fringetree	Rustic Sphinx Moth
<u><i>Cornus alternifolia</i></u>	Alternate Leaf Dogwood	Spring Azure
<u><i>Cornus amomum</i></u>	Silky Dogwood	Spring Azure
<i>Cornus florida</i>	Flowering Dogwood	Cecropia Moth, Spring Azure, Summer Azure
<u><i>Cornus racemosa</i></u>	Gray Dogwood	Spring Azure
<u><i>Cornus sericea</i></u>	Redosier Dogwood	Spring Azure
<u><i>Corylus americana</i></u>	American Hazelnut	Hosts 125 species of caterpillars
<i>Crataegus</i> spp.	Hawthorn	Striped Hairstreak
<u><i>Diervilla lonicera</i></u>	Northern Bush Honeysuckle	Hummingbird Clearwing, Snowberry Clearwing
<u><i>Diospyros virginiana</i></u>	Common Persimmon	Luna Moth, Royal Walnut Moth, Sculptured Moth
<i>Fagus grandifolia</i>	American Beech	Hosts 125 species of caterpillars
<i>Fraxinus</i> spp.	Ash species	Hosts 149 species of caterpillars
<u><i>Hamamelis virginiana</i></u>	Witchhazel	Hosts 62 species of caterpillars
<u><i>Hydrangea arborescens</i></u>	Smooth Hydrangea	Hydrangea Sphinx Moth

<i>Juglans nigra</i>	Black Walnut	Banded Hairstreak
<u><i>Juniperus virginiana</i></u>	Eastern Redcedar	Olive Hairstreak
<u><i>Lindera benzoin</i></u>	Spicebush	Spicebush Swallowtail
<u><i>Liquidambar styraciflua</i></u>	Sweetgum	Luna Moth
<u><i>Ostrya virginiana</i></u>	Hop Hornbeam	Hosts 94 species of caterpillars
<u><i>Nyssa sylvatica</i></u>	Black Gum	Hosts 26 species of caterpillars
<i>Liriodendron tulipifera</i>	Tulip Poplar	Tiger Swallowtail, Tuliptree Silkmoth
<i>Pinus</i> spp.	Pine species	Hosts over 200 species of caterpillars
<u><i>Platanus occidentalis</i></u>	Sycamore	Hosts 45 species of caterpillars
<i>Prunus serotina</i>	Black Cherry	Coral Hairstreak, Tiger Swallowtail, Red-spotted Purple, Spring Azure, and many more
<u><i>Quercus</i> spp.</u>	Oak species	Hosts 557 species of caterpillars
<u><i>Rhododendron</i> spp.</u>	Native azaleas	Hosts 50 species of caterpillars
<u><i>Rhus</i> spp.</u>	Sumac	Hosts 54 species of caterpillars
<i>Rosa</i> spp.	Rose species	Hosts 135 species of caterpillars
<u><i>Salix</i> spp.</u>	Willow species	Hosts 455 species of caterpillars
<u><i>Sassafras albidum</i></u>	Sassafras	Spicebush Swallowtail and 36 other species
<u><i>Spirea latifolia</i></u>	Meadowsweet	Hosts 89 species of caterpillars
<u><i>Spirea tomentosa</i></u>	Steeplebush	Hosts 89 species of caterpillars
<i>Tilia americana</i>	Basswood	Hosts 149 species of caterpillars
<i>Ulmus</i> spp.	Elm (native)	Hosts 215 species of caterpillars
<u><i>Vaccinium</i> spp.</u>	Blueberry	Hosts 294 species of caterpillars
<u><i>Viburnum</i> spp.</u>	Viburnum	Spring Azure, Henry's Elfin,
<u><i>Zanthoxylum americanum</i></u>	Prickly Ash	Giant Swallowtail

Perennials

Botanical Name	Common Name	Butterflies which use host plant
<u><i>Actaea racemosa</i></u>	Bugbane	Appalachian Azure, Gray Hairstreak, Little Sulphur
<u><i>Allium cernuum</i></u>	Nodding Onion	Hairstreak
<i>Amorpha fruticosa</i>	False Indigo	Silver-spotted Skipper
<u><i>Amsonia tabernaemontana</i></u>	Bluestar	Coral Hairstreak
<i>Andropogon gerardii</i>	Big Bluestem	Dusted Skipper, Cobweb Skipper
<u><i>Antennaria plantaginifolia</i></u>	Pussytoes	Painted Lady
<u><i>Aquilegia canadensis</i></u>	Wild Columbine	Columbine Duskywing
<i>Aristolochia macrophylla</i>	Dutchman's Pipe	Pipevine Swallowtail
<u><i>Aruncus dioicus</i></u>	Goat's Beard	Dusky Azure
<u><i>Asarum canadense</i></u>	Wild Ginger	Pipevine Swallowtail
<u><i>Asclepias</i> spp.</u>	Milkweed species	Monarch, Milkweed Tussock Moth
<u><i>Aster</i> spp.</u>	Aster species	Pearl Crescent, Checkerspots, and more
<u><i>Baptisia australis</i></u>	False Blue Indigo	Wild Indigo Duskywing, Eastern Tailed Blue, Orange Sulphur, Clouded Sulphur, Frosted

<u>Callirhoe involucrata</u>	Winecups	Elfin, Hoary Edge
<u>Carex appalachica</u>	Appalachian Sedge	Gray Hairstreak, Checkered Skipper
<u>Carex grayi</u>	Gray's Sedge	Skippers
<u>Carex pensylvanica</u>	Pennsylvania Sedge	Appalachian Brown
<u>Carex plantaginea</u>	Seersucker Sedge	Hosts over 30 species of caterpillars
<u>Carex stricta</u>	Tussock Sedge	Appalachian Brown
<u>Carex vulpinoidea</u>	Fox Sedge	Hosts over 30 species of caterpillars
<u>Chamaecrista fasciculata</u>	Partridge Pea	Hosts over 30 species of caterpillars
<u>Chelone glabra</u>	White Turtlehead	Cloudless Sulphur, Orange Sulphur, Sleepy Orange
<u>Chasmanthium latifolium</u>	Northern Sea Oats	Baltimore Checkerspot
<u>Echinacea purpurea</u>	Purple Coneflower	Northern Pearly-eye
<u>Eupatorium perfoliatum</u>	Boneset	Silvery Checkerspot
<u>Eutrochium spp.</u>	Joe Pye Weed species	Hosts over 40 species of caterpillars
<u>Fragaria virginiana</u>	Virginia Strawberry	Hosts over 40 species of caterpillars
<u>Guara lindheimeri</u>	Gaura, Bee Blossom	Gray Hairstreak
<u>Helenium autumnale</u>	Sneezeweed	Clouded Crimson moth
<u>Helianthus spp.</u>	Sunflower species	Silvery Checkerspot
<u>Hibiscus moscheutos</u>	Swamp Rose Mallow	Painted Lady, Silvery Checkerspot and more
<u>Mimulus ringens</u>	Monkey Flower	Hosts 20 species of caterpillars
<u>Monarda spp.</u>	Monarda species	Common Buckeye
<u>Penstemon spp.</u>	Beardtongue	Hermit Sphinx moth, Orange Mint moth
<u>Rudbeckia spp.</u>	Rudbeckia species	Several Checkerspot species
<u>Ruellia humilis</u>	Wild Petunia	Silvery Checkerspot, Bordered Patch
<u>Schizachyrium scoparium</u>	Little Bluestem	Common Buckeye
<u>Senna spp.</u>	Wild Senna species	Dusted Skipper, Swarthy Skipper, Indian Skipper, Crossline Skipper, Cobweb Skipper
<u>Solidago spp.</u>	Goldenrod species	Orange Sulphur, Cloudless Sulphur, Little Sulphur
<u>Thelypteris palustris</u>	Marsh Fern	Host over 100 species of caterpillars
<u>Verbena hastata</u>	Blue Vervain	Marsh Fern moth
<u>Vernonia spp.</u>	Ironweed species	Common Buckeye
<u>Viola spp.</u>	Violet species	Painted Lady
<u>Zizia aurea</u>	Golden Alexanders	Fritillary species
		Black Swallowtail