

COMMON BUTTERFLIES



Giant Swallowtail butterfly

Family: PAPI L I O N I D A E

Scientific name: *Papilio cresphontes*

Although they are more common in southern states, the Giant swallowtail can also be seen in Michigan. It is one of the largest North American butterflies and a strong flier, most easily captured while nectaring on flowers. The larvae, known as "Orange Dogs", feed on prickly ash (*Zanthoxylum*) and hop tree (*Ptelea*) in Michigan, but can be pests on Citrus farther south to the extent that they are sometimes controlled with pesticides.



Palamedes butterfly

Family: PAPI L I O N I D A E

Scientific name: *Papilio palamedes*

This native swallowtail is common in the southeastern United States, especially in the coastal plain where its larval hosts, red bay (*Persea*) and sassafras are abundant. Like a number of other swallowtails, Palamedes caterpillars have large dorsal eyespots that create the illusion of a larger animal, perhaps the head of a snake or tree frog.



Zebra butterfly

Family: H E L I C O N I I D A E

Scientific name: *Heliconius charitonius*

The Zebra butterfly has the narrow oval wings and bright colors that are characteristic of heliconiid butterflies. The range of the Zebra butterfly extends from the tropical Americas into Florida, South Carolina and Texas, where it inhabits deep woods or shady edges. Larvae of the Zebra butterfly feed on passion vines (*Passiflora*). Zebras and other heliconiids have the unusual habit of gathering at communal roosting sites to spend the night.



Black Swallowtail

Family: PAPILIONIDAE

Scientific name: *Papilio polyxenes*

This swallowtail is common along roadsides and in meadows across much of eastern North America. Females have more blue on the hind wings than males. The strikingly colored larvae feed on carious plants in the parsley family (Umbelliferae), and can sometimes be pests in gardens on carrot, celery, dill or rue (Rutaceae). Like most swallowtails, larvae of the Black Swallowtail have a two-branched organ called an osmaterium behind the head, which is extruded to emit foul-smelling defensive compounds when the caterpillar is disturbed.



Monarch

Family: DANAIIDAE

Scientific name: *Danaus plexippus*

The familiar monarch is well known for its spectacular migration in autumn to overwintering sites in California and central highlands west of Mexico City. Some sites are used year after year by generations of monarchs; how these butterflies navigate to traditional overwintering sites is still a mystery. In spring, butterflies begin the long migration back north, but few individuals actually survive to return to the northern part of their range. Instead, most butterflies lay eggs in the southern United States and then die; it is this generation of adults, which completes the migration north in early summer to breed. Monarch caterpillars feed on milkweeds (*Asclepias*), storing poisonous compounds from the plants that make adult butterflies distasteful and toxic to birds and mammals.

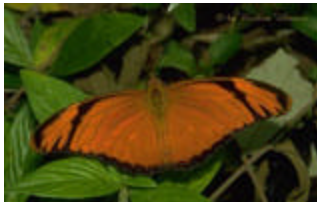


Queen

Family: DANAI DAE

Scientific name: *Danaus gilippus*

This close relative of the Monarch butterfly often strays as far north as Massachusetts. Their larva feed on milkweed as well. The Queen caterpillar differs from the Monarch by having three pairs of thread-like tubercles on its body, the Monarch possesses two pairs.



Julia

Family: HELI CONI I DAE

Scientific name: *Dryas iulia*

This fast flying butterfly is a close relative of the Zebra Longwing butterfly and is often called the Orange Longwing. Its larvae feed on various species of passion vines. From this host plant the Julia sequesters toxic compounds that make them distasteful to predators. They advertise this with their bright colors. The chrysalis resembles a dead leaf, which mimics their surrounding and provides protection from predators.