

COMMON HOST PLANTS

Passion vines

Family: Passifloraceae

Scientific name: *Passiflora spp.*

The larvae of heliconia butterflies feed entirely upon Passion vine foliage. The caterpillars have adapted ways to detoxify the chemicals found within the plant tissues. The caterpillars collect these chemicals in their bodies and keep them as butterflies. These chemicals are foul tasting and are an effective deterrent against insectivorous birds and other animals.

The bright coloration employed by the butterflies is a signal to all predators that the butterfly contains toxic compounds and should be avoided.

Milkweeds

Family: Asclepiadaceae

Scientific name: *Asclepias spp.*

The larvae of the Monarch and Queen butterflies feed entirely upon Milkweed foliage. The caterpillars have adapted ways to detoxify the chemicals found within the plant tissues. These chemicals are foul tasting and are an effective deterrent against insectivorous birds and other animals.

The bright coloration employed by the butterflies is a signal to all predators that the butterfly contains toxic compounds and should be avoided.

Parsley

Family: Umbelliferae

Scientific name: *Petroselinum crispum*

Parsley is the only plant eaten by the caterpillars of the black swallowtail butterfly. It is a clump-forming biennial to about 1 foot tall and twice as wide. It has bright green multi-compound curly or flat leaves.

Dill

Family: Umbelliferae

Scientific name: *Anethum graveolens*

Caterpillars are fond of dill. It is one of the herbs butterflies like to feast on. Dill loves to bask in the sun and grow up to 3 feet tall. Dill, a member of the parsley family is a strong-smelling, fennel-like, annual plant. The yellow flowers develop into fruiting umbels. In appearance, its seeds are intermediate between those of parsnip and carrot.

COMMON NECTAR PLANTS

Pentas

Family: Rubiaceae

Scientific name: *Pentas lanceolata*

These may be red, white, lavender, purple or shades of pink. All are extremely attractive to butterflies. They are perennial, dark green, lance-shaped; somewhat fuzzy and deeply veined leaves provide a lush backdrop for prolific clusters of never-ending, five-petaled flowers. They love warm temperatures and thrive very well in hot, dry climates, but do not like wet feet for extended periods of time.

Lantana

Family: Verbenaceae

Scientific name: *Lantana camara*

This is a tough evergreen shrub from the tropics. It will grow to 6' high and may spread to 8'. Stems and leaves are covered with hairs and are rough in texture. This plant has an unpleasant aroma (like cat urine) yet it is quite attractive to butterflies.