



Pipevine Swallowtail caterpillar on Pipevine

BUTTERFLY HOST PLANTS FOR SOUTH JERSEY LANDSCAPES

(January, 2020 Edition)

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NOTE: This list begins with native trees and shrubs because, along with native grasses, they make up the vast majority of native host plants. They are more persistent in the landscape over time and region and also provide more dependable and abundant leaf food than do perennials. The moral: Add native trees and shrubs to your backyard habitat!

NATIVE HOST PLANTS

COMMON NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME	BUTTERFLY SPECIES
NATIVE TREES:		
Birches	<i>Betula</i> spp	Red-spotted Purple
Black Cherry	<i>Prunus serotina</i>	Eastern Tiger Swallowtail, Red-spotted Purple, Coral Hairstreak, Striped Hairstreak, Spring Azure
Black Locust	<i>Robinia pseudoacacia</i>	Silver-spotted Skipper
Eastern Redcedar	<i>Juniperus virginiana</i>	Juniper Hairstreak
Elms	<i>Ulmus</i> spp	Question Mark, Mourning Cloak, Eastern Comma
Flowering Dogwood	<i>Cornus Florida</i>	Spring Azure
Hackberry	<i>Celtis occidentalis</i> , <i>Celtis pumila</i>	American Snout, Hackberry and Tawny Emperors, Question Mark, Mourning Cloak
Hickories	<i>Carya</i> spp	Banded Hairstreak
Hollies	<i>Ilex</i> spp	Henry's Elfin, Holly Azure
Oaks	<i>Quercus</i> spp	Banded, Edwards, Oak, and White-M Hairstreaks, Sleepy, Juvenal's and Horace's Duskywings
Pines	<i>Pinus</i> spp	Eastern Pine Elfin
Sassafras	<i>Sassafras albidum</i>	Spicebush Swallowtail
Sweetbay	<i>Magnolia virginiana</i>	Eastern Tiger Swallowtail
Tuliptree	<i>Linodendron tulipifera</i>	Eastern Tiger Swallowtail
Willows	<i>Salix</i> spp	Viceroy, Mourning Cloak, Red-spotted Purple

NATIVE SHRUBS:		
Blueberries	Vaccinium spp	Spring Azure, Striped Hairstreak, Henry's Elfin, Brown Elfin
Dogwoods	Cornus spp	Spring Azure, Summer Azure
Spicebush	Lindera benzoin	Spicebush Swallowtail
Viburnums	Viburnum spp	Spring Azure, Summer Azure
Willows	Salix spp	Viceroy, Mourning Cloak, Red-spotted Purple
Winged sumac	Rhus copallina	Red-banded Hairstreak
NATIVE PERENNIALS		
Asters	Aster, Symphyotrichum, Eurybia	Pearl Crescent, Painted Lady
Blue False Indigo, Wild Indigo	Baptisia australis, Baptisia tinctoria	Silver-spotted Skipper, Wild Indigo Duskywing, Frosted Elfin
Bush Clovers	Lespedeza spp	Southern and Northern Cloudywings, Hoary Edge, Eastern-tailed Blue
False Nettle	Boehmeria cylindrica	Red Admiral, Question Mark, Eastern Comma
Gerardia	Agalinis purpurea	Common Buckeye
Golden Alexander	Zizia aurea	Black Swallowtail
Lupine	Lupinus perennis	Wild Indigo Duskywing, Frosted Elfin
Milkweeds	Asclepias spp	Monarch
Mustard Family	Arabis spp. (rock cresses), Lepidium virginicum (Wild pepper grass) and Cardamine parviflora	Falcate Orangetip
Partridge Pea (annual) and Sensitive Plant	Chamaecrista fasciculata, Chamaecrista nictitans	Cloudless Sulphur, Little Yellow
Pussytoes	Antennaria spp	American Lady
Senna	Senna marilandica	Cloudless Sulphur, Sleepy Orange
Sweet everlasting	Pseudognaphalium obtusifolium	American Lady
Tick-trefoils	Desmodium spp.	Grey Hairstreak, Eastern Tailed-Blue, Southern and Northern Cloudywings, Hoary Edge
Violets	Viola spp	Variegated, Meadow, and Great Spangled Fritillaries
NATIVE GRASSES		
Bluegrasses	Poa spp	Little Wood-Satyr, Common Wood-nymph, Peck's, Tawny-edged, Least and Delaware Skippers
Bluestem grasses	Andropogon, Schizachyrium	Swarthy, Crossline, Delaware, and Cobweb Skippers
Panic grasses, Switchgrass	Panicum spp	Tawny-edged Skipper, Delaware Skipper, Northern Broken-dash
Purpletop	Tridens flava	Common Wood-nymph, Little Glassywing, Zabulon Skipper, Crossline Skipper
NATIVE VINES		
Pipevine	Aristolochia durior	Pipevine Swallowtail

NON-NATIVE HOST PLANTS

Canna	Canna spp	Brazilian Skipper
Carrot Family Plants	Dill, Fennel, Parsley, Queen Anne's Lace	Black Swallowtail
Clovers	Trifolium spp, Melilotus alba (White sweet clover)	Eastern Tailed-blue, Clouded Sulphur, Orange Sulphur
Crabgrass	Digitaria spp	Fiery Skipper, Sachem
Hairy Bitter-Cress	Cardamine hirsuta	Falcate Orangetip
Hollyhock	Althea spp	Painted Lady, Common Checkered Skipper
Lambsquarters	Chenopodium album	Common Sootywing, Hayhurst's Scallopwing
Phragmites	Phragmites communis	Broad-winged Skipper
Plantain	Plantago spp	Common Buckeye
Sheep sorrel	Rumex acetosella	American Copper
*Stinging Nettle	Urtica dioica	Eastern Comma, Red Admiral, Question Mark

WHY ARE NON-NATIVES ON THIS LIST? None of us would consider planting weedy, non-native plants, like crabgrass, sheep sorrel, and hairy bittercress in our yards. However, since some of these plants invade our yards no matter what we do, it can be helpful to know which native butterflies use them. We can then manage accordingly by leaving patches of sheep sorrel, hairy bitter-cress, or clovers for American Coppers, Falcate Orangetips, and Eastern Tailed-blues. You might also want to consider raising lawnmower height to the recommended 3"– 4" which allows the caterpillars of sachems to successfully pupate from leaf nests made at the base of crabgrass.

*Stinging nettle, despite its name, is a valuable non-native host plant. It is best grown in a large galvanized container to prevent its roots from spreading into the garden or yard.

CAUTIONARY NOTE ABOUT NEONICOTINOIDS: It is difficult to find native plants in big box stores (and even some nurseries) and sometimes impossible to learn what insecticides were used on them. It's best to track down nurseries when you can talk to the growers directly. Be sure to ask about insecticide applications. Neonicotinoids are systemic insecticides. Plants treated with them will kill both caterpillars and adult butterflies.

NOTE: The lists above are not complete. I have included those plants that are relatively easy to find and I have not included some that are troublesome. I have also left out some sedges and grasses which are host plants for skippers but beyond the scope of this list.

SOURCES:

Butterflies of New Jersey: A Guide to Their Status, Distribution, Conservation & Appreciation by Michael Gochfeld and Joanna Burger (Rutgers University Press, 1997)

Butterflies of the East Coast: An Observer's Guide by Rich Cech and Guy Tudor (Princeton University Press, 2005)

Bringing Nature Home by Douglas W. Tallamy (Timber Press, 2007)

Pat Sutton, pers. comments and help.

NABA/North Jersey Butterfly Club, www.naba.org/chapters/nabanj/

South Jersey Butterflies: 55 Species You Can Find

Since 2008, the **South Jersey Butterfly Project** has been tracking butterflies in the NJ's southern eight counties: Burlington, Ocean, Camden, Atlantic, Gloucester, Salem, Cumberland, and Cape May.

We chart which species are flying when, in what numbers, and lots more. So far, we have documented the abundance, seasonality, habitats, and behavior of 108 species. Fifty-five of them are listed here.

We are always on the lookout for new observers. Would you like to participate? It's free and easy. All you need is curiosity! Go to sjbutterflies.org or Google "**South Jersey Butterflies**" to find our log and blog and to learn more. (For instance, what are the 50+ species of our area *not* listed here?)

Status and seasonality listed below are averages from 2008-2019. Species listed with "fluctuating numbers" are especially variable, but all species' numbers go up and down from year to year. In some years "widespread" species can be rare, and "uncommon" numerous. Seasonality also shifts with weather and other variables, so we have reports of some individuals outside the average flight periods noted here.

Species marked with an asterisk (*) are single-brooded: adults emerge to fly for one short period a year. Most SJ species, however, have two or three broods (generations) each year and so can be recorded over several different months. *See the sightings log and the blog for more info about when and where to find these butterflies – and also how you might report your own discoveries.*



SWALLOWTAILS		SPREAD-WING SKIPPERS	
Pipeline Swallowtail	Localized, most frequent in July	Silver-spotted Skipper	Widespread, April-October
Black Swallowtail	Widespread, April-October	Northern Cloudywing	Localized, tough ID, May/June-July
E. Tiger Swallowtail	Widespread, April-September	Southern Cloudywing	Like lookalike above
Spicebush Swallowtail	Widespread, May-September	Juvenal's Duskywing*	Widespread, April-May
WHITES & SULPHURS		Horace's Duskywing	Widespread, April/May-September
Cabbage White	Abundant April-October	Wild Indigo Duskywing	Tough ID, lookalikes above, May-Sept
Falcate Orange-tip*	Localized, usually seen only in April	Common Checkered	Fluctuating numbers, June-Sept
Clouded Sulphur	Widespread, April-October	Common Sootywing	Fairly common, May-August
Orange Sulphur	Abundant, April-November	FOLDED-WING SKIPPERS	
Cloudless Sulphur	Migrant from south, usually Aug-Oct	Least Skipper	Widespread, May-October
LYCAENIDS		Peck's Skipper	Summer, mostly north of Cape May Co
American Copper	Widespread, April-October	Tawny-edged Skipper	Requires careful ID, May-Sept
Coral Hairstreak*	Localized, usually seen only June-July	Crossline Skipper	Compare lookalike above, May-Sept
Banded Hairstreak*	Localized, usually seen only June-July	Little Glassywing	Fairly common, June-August
Juniper Hairstreak	Fluctuating yearly numbers, May-August	Sachem	May-November; often abundant
White-M Hairstreak	Fluctuating yearly numbers, May-Sept	Rare Skipper*	Localized, brackish rivers in July
Gray Hairstreak	Widespread, May-October	Delaware Skipper	Widespread, June-August
Red-banded Hairstreak	Fluctuating yearly numbers, May-Oct	Zabulon Skipper	Widespread, May-Sept
Eastern Tailed-Blue	Widespread, April-October	Aaron's Skipper	Coastal and localized, June-Sept
Blueberry Azure*	Localized, usually seen only March-April	Broad-winged Skipper	Coastal, June-Sept, oft abundant
Holly Azure*	Localized, usually seen only April-May	Dun Skipper	Widespread, late May-Sept
Summer Azure	Fairly common, May-September	Salt-Marsh Skipper	Coastal, June-Sept; oft abundant
NYMPHALIDS		Another Species?	See the blog for full list
American Snout	Localized near hackberry, May-August	<i>Not on blog list?</i> ☒	<i>Please photo and report on our log.</i>
Variegated Fritillary	May-October, some years common		
Pearl Crescent	April-October, occ. very numerous		
Question Mark	March-May, August-October		
Eastern Comma	Virtually same as its lookalike above		
Mourning Cloak	Usually first species of spring, March-Oct		
American Lady	Widespread, April-October		
Painted Lady	Fluctuating yearly numbers; can be rare		
Red Admiral	Widespread; records for all 12 months		
Common Buckeye	Widespread, April-Oct/November		
Red-spotted Purple	Widespread, May-Sept/October		
Little Wood-Satyr	Widespread, May-July (possibly *)		
Common Wood Nymph	Widespread, June-September		
DANAIDS			
Monarch	Uncommon May/June; numerous later		