TOP 10 WAYS TO CREATE A HAVEN FOR BUTTERFLIES

1.   Locate in a sunny area. Butterflies and most butterfly-attracting plants require bright sunshine. They are cold blooded and don't fly in the morning. The temperature needs to be about 70 for them to fly. When you see a butterfly with its wings open, it is gathering heat to pump its wings and fly. When the wings are closed together, the temperature is reached.

2.   Plant nectar-producing flowers. Unlike hummingbirds they like short tubes. Don't throw out overripe bananas or watermelon rinds. Butterflies love the sweet, syrupy sugar in them.

3.   Select single flowers rather than double flowers. It is easier for them to land on a flat surface.

4.   Use large masses of one color rather than mixed colors. Their least favorite colors are green, blue and white. Yellow, red and purple should be your first choices.

5.   Have something blooming year round. To keep butterflies in your garden plan plantings that will supply nectar throughout the growing season.

6.   Host plants provide food for caterpillars. My pick of herbs would be dill, fennel and lots of parsley. If you run out of parsley, buy some in the produce dept of the grocery store.

7.   Butterfly puddling is an easy fix in the garden and rewarding. Simply use a trash can lid or a plastic liner sunk in the ground. Fill with sand and a mixture of ½ cup salt mixed in 1 gallon of water. I have brought salt water back from the ocean in a milk jug.

8.   Rocks and stones are solar collectors to the butterflies to help them warm up. Leave some small areas of your garden untidy, tucked away out of sight. Have a few, small woodpiles, even sticks, for them to find protection from storms and wind.

9.   Pesticides are a no-no for caterpillars and butterflies. If you must use selective pesticides for roses or tomatoes, keep them away from the flowers and herbs that they visit.

10.   Learn to recognize the good caterpillars that become your desired butterflies.

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