

NATIVE PLANTS AND BUTTERFLIES SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY

Compiled by George Butterworth, California Native Plant Society, © 2007

This list shows California native plants and the butterflies that use them. See the companion paper “Butterfly Gardening with Native Plants” for listings by butterfly. Visit www.cnps-slo.org to download these papers.

PLANT BUTTERFLY

- Achillea millefolium* (yarrow). Juniper hairstreak
- Adenostema fasciculatum* (chamise). Gray hairstreak
- Aesculus californica* (buckeye). Lorquin’s admiral; spring azure; buckeye; mournful & propertius duskywing; northern cloudywing; coronis fritillary; bramble green, gold-hunter’s, & great purple hairstreak; Pacific orangetip; great basin wood nymph; rural, silver-spotted, & umber skipper; Calif. dogface; western tiger swallowtail
- Allium* (wild onion). Sleepy duskywing
- Alnus* (alder). Western tiger swallowtail
- Amaranthus* (amaranth). Common sootywing
- Ambrosia* (bur-sage). Common sootywing
- Amorpha californica* (false indigo). Northern cloudywing, silver-spotted skipper, Calif. dogface, southern dogface
- Amsinckia* (fiddleneck). Silvery & Sonoran blue, propertius duskywing, painted lady, large marble, Pacific orangetip
- Anaphalis* (everlasting). American lady, woodland skipper
- Antennaria* (pussy toes). American lady
- Antirrhinum* (snapdragon). Buckeye
- Apiaceae (umbels). Great copper, great purple hairstreak, anise swallowtail
- Apocynum* (dogbane). Arrowhead & western tailed blue; great copper; northern cloudywing; propertius duskywing; bramble green, California, gold-hunter’s, & hedgerow hairstreak; silver-spotted & woodland skipper; western tiger swallowtail
- Arabis* (rock cress). Spring azure, Calif. marble, large marble, desert orangetip, margined white, spring white
- Arabis glabra* (tower mustard). Large marble, Pacific orangetip
- Arbutus menziesii* (madrone). Brown elfin
- Arctostaphylos* (manzanita). Brown elfin, monarch, Calif. tortoiseshell
- Asclepias* (milkweed). Red admiral; acmon blue; spring azure; Edith’s checkerspot; gorgon copper; common sootywing; northern cloudywing; California, gold-hunter’s, great purple, juniper, mountain mahogany, & sylvan hairstreak; American & West Coast lady; monarch; queen; sachem; silver-spotted, small checked, & umber skipper; orange sulfur; western tiger swallowtail; checkered white
- Aster* (aster). Western pygmy blue; buckeye; purplish & tailed copper; mylitta crescent; coronis fritillary; American & painted lady; Mormon metalmark; common checkered, sandhill, western branded, & woodland skipper; orange sulfur; Milbert’s tortoiseshell; Becker’s & checkered white
- Asteraceae (composites). Red admiral; Boisduval’s, silvery, & western tailed blue; Leanira checkerspot; tailed copper; pacuvius & sleepy duskywing; great purple hairstreak; monarch; painted lady; great basin wood nymph; eufala, fiery, northern white, & small checkered skipper; western tiger swallowtail; mourning cloak; cabbage & checkered white
- Astragalus* (milkvetch, locoweed). Acmon, arrowhead, marine, silvery, & western tailed blue; northern cloudywing, orange sulfur
- Astragalus douglasii* (Douglas milkvetch). Harford’s sulfur
- Atriplex* (saltbush). Western pygmy blue, Mojave sootywing
- Atriplex canescens* (4-wing saltbush). San Emigdio & western pygmy blue; Mojave sooty-wing
- A. lentiformis* (big saltbush, quailbush). Western pygmy blue
- A. patula* (spear oracle). Western pygmy blue
- Baccharis douglasii* (marsh baccharis). Acmon blue, buckeye, American lady
- B. pilularis* (coyote brush). Acmon & western pygmy blue; buckeye; purplish copper; sachem; umber & woodland skipper
- B. salicifolia* (mule fat). Monarch
- Bidens* (beggar’s tick). Red admiral, sleepy orange
- Boraginaceae (borage family). Painted lady
- Brassicaceae (mustards). Calif. & large marble; desert & Pacific orangetip; Becker’s, cabbage, checkered, margined, & spring white
- Brodiaea*. Sonoran blue, northern cloudywing, large marble, Pacific orangetip
- Calyptidium monandrum* (pussy paws). Lupine & western tailed blue; Calif. marble, two-banded checkered skipper
- Cardamine californica* (milkmaids, toothwort). Margined white

Carex (sedge). Umber & western branded skipper
Castilleja (paintbrush, owl's clover). Buckeye; Edith's, Leanira, & variable checkerspot
Caulanthus (jewelflower). Calif. marble, desert orangetip, spring white
Caulanthus inflatus (desert candle). Desert orangetip
Ceanothus (Calif. or mountain lilac). Lorquin's admiral; spring azure; pacuvius & propertius duskywing; bramble green, hedgerow, & Muir's hairstreak; pale swallowtail; Calif. tortoiseshell
C. cuneatus (buck brush). Pacuvius dusky-wing, brown elfin, California & hedgerow hairstreak, pale swallowtail, California tortoiseshell
C. integerrimus (deer brush). California hairstreak
C. oliganthus (Jim brush). Pacuvius duskywing
C. thyrsiflorus (blue blossom). Calif. tortoiseshell
Cercis occidentalis (redbud). Sleepy duskywing, brown elfin
Cercocarpus betuloides (mountain mahogany). California, hedgerow, & mountain mahogany hairstreak
Chaenactis glabriuscula (yellow pincushion). Edith's checkerspot
Chenopodium (pigweed). Western pygmy blue, common sootywing, brown elfin
Chlorogalum pomeridianum (soap plant). Brown elfin
Chrysolepis chrysophylla (chinquapin). Golden hairstreak
Chrysothamnus nauseosus (rabbitbrush). Acmon & western pygmy blue; buckeye; mylitta crescent; coronis fritillary; thicket hairstreak; Mormon metalmark; Columbian, common checkered, and woodland skipper; sachem; Milbert's tortoiseshell; mourning cloak; Becker's white
Cirsium (thistle). Mylitta crescent; northern cloudywing; coronis & gulf fritillary; American, painted, & West Coast lady; Pacific orangetip; sachem; silver-spotted, umber, western branded, & woodland skipper; Calif. dogface; cloudless & Harford's sulfur; pale & western tiger swallowtail; Milbert's tortoiseshell
Clarkia. Lindsey's skipper
Collinsia (Chinese houses). Spring azure
Convolvulus, Calystegia (morning glory). Cloudless sulfur
Cordylanthus (bird's beak). Leanira checkerspot
Coreopsis (tickseed). Buckeye, southern dogface
Cornus (dogwood). Spring azure
Croton. Eufala skipper
Cupressus sargentii (Sargent cypress). Muir's hairstreak
Cuscuta (dodder). Brown elfin
Cynodon dactylon (Bermuda grass, non-native). Eufala, fiery, & sandhill skipper; sachem
Danthonia californica (oatgrass). Columbian & Lindsey's skipper
Deschampsia (hairgrass). Umber skipper
Descurainia pinnata (tansy mustard). Juniper hairstreak; Calif. & large marble; desert & Pacific orangetip; spring white
Dichelostemma capitatum (blue dicks). Propertius duskywing, Pacific orangetip, pale swallowtail
Digitaria (crabgrass, non-native). Fiery skipper, sachem
Distichlis spicata (salt grass). Sandhill skipper
Dudleya. Sonoran blue, Moss's elfin
Elymus (wildrye, squirreltail). Woodland skipper
Epilobium canum (Calif. fuschia). Calif. dogface
Ericaceae (heaths). Sleepy duskywing
Ericameria (goldenbush). Juniper hairstreak
Erigeron (fleabane daisy). Variable checkerspot, gulf fritillary, common checkered skipper, sleepy orange, Milbert's tortoiseshell, checkered white
Eriodictyon (yerba santa). Lorquin's admiral; arrowhead & western tailed blue; Edith's, Leanira, & variable checkerspot; mylitta crescent; funereal, mournful, & propertius duskywing; northern cloudywing; callippe & coronis fritillary; brown elfin; bramble green, California, gold-hunter's, hedgerow, & mountain mahogany hairstreak; American, painted, & West Coast lady; Pacific orangetip; northern white, silver-spotted, umber, & western branded skipper; Calif. dogface; pale & western tiger swallowtail
Eriogonum (buckwheat). Acmon, arrowhead, Bernardino, Boisduval's, lupine, Pacific dotted, & western tailed blue; buckeye; variable checkerspot; mylitta crescent; funereal & mournful duskywing; callippe fritillary; bramble green, California, gold-hunter's, gray, great purple, hedgerow, & juniper hairstreak; American, painted, & West Coast lady; Behr's & Mormon metalmark; northern white & western branded skipper
E. elongatum (long-stem buckwheat). Gorgon copper
E. fasciculatum (Calif. buckwheat). Bernardino & lupine blue; bramble green & mountain mahogany hairstreak; brown elfin; Behr's & Mormon metalmark; great basin wood nymph
E. latifolium (coast buckwheat). Bernardino blue, Mormon metalmark
E. nudum (naked buckwheat). Pacific dotted blue, Leanira checkerspot, gorgon & tailed copper, gold-hunter's hairstreak, Mormon metalmark, Great Basin wood nymph
E. trichopes (inflated buckwheat). Pacific dotted blue, Mormon metalmark
E. umbellatum (sulfur buckwheat). Bernardino, lupine, & Pacific dotted blue; juniper hairstreak
Eriophyllum (woolly sunflower). Gorgon copper
Erysimum (wallflower). Large marble, pale swallowtail
Fabaceae (legumes). Acmon, marine, silvery, & western tailed blue; funereal duskywing; northern cloudywing; bramble green & gray hairstreak; painted lady; silver-spotted skipper; Calif. & southern dogface; orange sulfur; checkered white
Festuca (fescue). Common ringlet; Great Basin wood nymph; Lindsey's & western branded skipper
Foeniculum (fennel, anise; non-native). Anise swallowtail
Fraxinus (ash). Western tiger swallowtail
Gaultheria shallon (salal). Brown elfin
Gilia capitata (globe gilia). Variable checkerspot
Glycyrrhiza lepidota (wild licorice). Marine blue, silver-spotted skipper
Gnaphalium (everlasting). American lady, woodland skipper
Grindelia (gumplant). Great copper
Hazardia (saw-tooth goldenbush). Gabb's checkerspot
Helianthus (sunflower). Funereal dusky-wing, monarch, queen, sachem

Heliotropium (heliotrope). Acmon & San Emigdio blue; buckeye; great & purplish copper; mylitta crescent; common sootywing; eufala, sandhill, & small checkered skipper
Heterotheca (telegraph weed). Gabb's checkerspot
Horkelia. Purplish copper, rural skipper, two-banded checkered skipper
Isomeris arborea (bladderpod). Becker's white
Juniperus californica (Calif. juniper). Juniper hairstreak
Koeleria macrantha (Junegrass). Columbian skipper
Lamiaceae (mints). Lorquin's and red admiral; arrowhead blue; buckeye; variable checkerspot; mournful duskywing; northern cloudywing; coronis fritillary; painted & West Coast lady; monarch; northern white, small checkered, & western branded skipper; Calif. dogface; Harford's sulfur; pale swallowtail; cabbage white
Lathyrus (wild pea). Marine, silvery, & western tailed blue
Lavatera (island or tree mallow). West coast lady
Lepidium (peppergrass). Checkered white
Lessingia filaginifolia (Calif. aster). Spring azure, Gabb's checkerspot
Leymus (wild rye, eg). Woodland skipper
Liliaceae (lily family). Pale & western tiger swallowtail
Linaria canadensis (blue toadflax). Buckeye
Lithocarpus densiflorus (tanoak). Golden hairstreak
Lobelia dunnii. Painted lady, northern white skipper, western tiger swallowtail
Locust. Silver-spotted skipper
Lomatium (wild parsley). Anise swallowtail
Lonicera (honeysuckle). Edith's checkerspot, silver-spotted skipper
Lotus. Silvery & western tailed blue; northern cloudywing; silver-spotted skipper
Lotus scoparius (deerweed, Calif. broom). Acmon, marine, & silvery blue; funereal duskywing, bramble green hairstreak; Harford's & orange sulfur
L. purshianus (Spanish lotus). Acmon blue
Lupinus (lupine). Acmon, arrowhead, Boisduval's, & silvery blue; Harford's sulfur
Lupinus (bush lupine). Arrowhead blue, Harford's sulfur
Malacothamnus (bush mallow). Northern white skipper
Malvaceae (mallows). Common sootywing; gray hairstreak; painted & West Coast lady; monarch; common checkered, northern white, small checkered, & white checkered skipper
Malvella leprosa (alkali mallow). Small checkered skipper, white checkered skipper
Melica (melic). Rural skipper
Mimulus (monkey flower). Buckeye
Mimulus aurantiacus (sticky monkey flower). Variable checkerspot
Monardella villosa (coyote mint). Leanira checkerspot, callippe fritillary, western tiger swallowtail, Milbert's tortoiseshell
Nasella (needlegrass). Western branded skipper
Parietaria hespera (pellitory). Red admiral
Passiflora (passion vine, non-native). Gulf fritillary
Penstemon (beardtongue). Variable checkerspot
Phacelia. Propertius duskywing
Phoradendron (mistletoe). Great purple hairstreak, thicket hairstreak (on pines)
Pinus (pine). Buckeye
Plantago (plantain). Buckeye
Plantago erecta (plantain). Edith's checkerspot
Platanus racemosa (sycamore). Western tiger swallowtail
Plumbaginaceae (leadworts). Marine blue
Poaceae (grasses). Common ringlet; Great Basin wood nymph; eufala, fiery, Lindsey's, rural, sandhill, umber, western branded, & woodland skipper
Poa secunda (bluegrass). Western branded skipper
Polygonum (knotweed). Purplish copper
Populus (cottonwood). Lorquin's admiral, western tiger swallowtail, mourning cloak
Potentilla (cinquefoil). Purplish copper, two-banded checkered skipper
Prunus ilicifolia (holly-leaf cherry). Pale swallowtail
Prunus virginiana (chokecherry). Lorquin's admiral, Milbert's tortoiseshell
Quercus (oak). Calif. sister; spring azure; propertius & sleepy duskywing; Calif. & gold-hunter's hairstreak; mourning cloak
Q. agrifolia (coast live oak). Calif. sister, mournful duskywing, propertius duskywing
Q. berberidifolia (scrub oak). Gold-hunter's hairstreak
Q. chrysolepis (canyon live oak). Calif. sister, golden hairstreak
Q. douglasii (blue oak). Mournful duskywing, gold-hunter's hairstreak
Q. durata (leather oak). Sleepy duskywing
Q. garryana (Oregon oak). Propertius duskywing
Q. lobata (valley oak). Mournful duskywing
Q. wislizenii (interior live oak). Gold-hunter's hairstreak
Rhamnus californica (coffeeberry). Pale swallowtail
Rhamnus ilicifolia (holly-leaf redberry). Pale swallowtail
Ribes (gooseberry, currant). Tailed copper
Ribes divaricatum (straggly gooseberry). Oreas comma
Rorippa (water cress). Margined white
Rumex (dock). Great copper, purplish copper
Rumex hymenosepalus (wild rhubarb). Great copper
Salicornia (pickleweed). Western pygmy blue
Salix (willow). Lorquin's admiral, spring azure, brown elfin, sylvan hairstreak, western tiger swallowtail, mourning cloak
Salvia (sage). Buckeye; mournful duskywing; callippe & coronis fritillary; West Coast lady; Calif. dogface; western tiger swallowtail
Scrophulariaceae (figworts). Edith's checkerspot, Calif. dogface, western tiger swallowtail
Scrophularia (figwort). Variable checkerspot
Sedum (stonecrop). Red admiral, Moss's elfin
Senecio (groundsel). Mormon metalmark
Senna. Cloudless sulfur, sleepy orange
Sidalcea (checker mallow). West coast lady
Solidago (goldenrod). Western pygmy blue, coronis fritillary, Columbian skipper, Becker's white
Stachys (hedge nettle). Calif. dogface
Stanleya pinnata (prince's plume). Becker's white

Streptanthus (jewelflower). Calif. marble, desert orangetip, spring white
Symphoricarpos (snowberry). Variable checkerspot
Suaeda (seablite). Western pygmy blue
Tauschia. Anise swallowtail
Thysanocarpus (lacepod). Pacific orangetip, spring white
Trichostema lanatum (woolly blue curls). Calif. dogface
Trifolium (clover). Acmon & marine blue; common sootywing; northern cloudywing; orange sulfur; southern dogface
Triteleia (Ithuriel's spear). Pale swallowtail

Urtica dioica (stinging nettle). Red admiral; satyr comma; painted & West Coast lady, Milbert's tortoiseshell
Verbena. Buckeye; mournful & sleepy duskywing; fiery skipper; sachem; Calif. & southern dogface
Vicia (vetch). Arrowhead, silvery, & western tailed blue; northern cloudywing; propretius duskywing; eufala & silver-spotted skipper; orange sulfur
Viola (violet). Spring azure; callippe & coronis fritillary
Wyethia (mules ears). Lindsey's skipper

To attract butterflies it is important to have two types of plants growing in your yard or your general area: 1) food plants for the larvae (caterpillars), and 2) nectar plants for adult butterflies.

IMPORTANT CATERPILLAR PLANTS

The most important plants for caterpillars are buckwheat, California lilac (*Ceanothus*), deerweed and milk vetch and lupines, mallows, oaks, rock cress and other mustards, and grasses. Unless you provide larval food plants in your garden or nearby, the number of adult butterflies will be limited.

IMPORTANT NECTAR PLANTS (adapted from lists by Las Pilitas Nursery and Paul Opler)

In order to have adult butterflies in your garden for the longest period of time (spring to fall) you must have plants flowering continuously. Thus the nectar plants below are very important. They are given in approximate order of flowering time, beginning with March. You may have to revise these for your own place, according to zone, soil, etc.

Globe gilia. *Gilia capitata*.
Pincushion. *Chaenactis*, eg *glabriuscula*.
Seaside daisy. *Erigeron glaucus*.
Yerba santa. *Eriodictyon*.
Sunflower. *Helianthus gracilentus*.
Sage. *Salvia*, eg *mellifera*, *spathacea*.
Mock orange. *Philadelphus lewisii*.
Tree anemone. *Carpenteria californica*.
Buckwheat. *Eriogonum fasciculatum*.
Mint. *Monardella*.

Hedge nettle. *Stachys*.
Saw-tooth goldenbush. *Hazardia squarrosa*.
Verbena. *Verbena lasiostachys*.
Woolly blue curls. *Trichostema lanatum*.
Thistle. *Cirsium*, eg *occidentale*.
Desert willow. *Chilopsis linearis*.
Milkweed. *Asclepias eriocarpa*, *fascicularis*.
Buckwheat. *Eriogonum elongatum*, *latifolium*, *nudum*, *roseum*.
California fuschia. *Epilobium canum*.
Rabbitbrush. *Chrysothamnus nauseosus*

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