

South



Native Plant GARDENING FOR BIRDS, BEES & BUTTERFLIES



Jaret C. Daniels

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Why You Should Plant a Garden

Landscaping with native plants offers numerous benefits. First and foremost, it helps increase habitat and provides critical resources for wildlife. Studies have shown that including native plant species and increasing overall plant diversity help support a greater abundance and diversity of wildlife. Natives are adapted to the growing conditions, such as soil and climate, of the locations where they naturally occur. As a result, they tend to perform better than nonnative species once established, have fewer pest or disease problems, and require less water, fertilizer, and general maintenance—all of which can provide cost savings over time. Lastly, they add tremendous beauty to our landscapes and help provide increased opportunities for people to connect—or reconnect—with nature.

FIRST STEP: INVENTORY YOUR YARD

When you plant a garden, it's critical to select plants that will thrive on your property. This means considering a number of factors, such as light levels and soil conditions, but this isn't as complicated as it might seem at first. In fact, doing just a little homework ahead of time will improve your odds of growing healthy, beautiful plants—and attracting pollinators—dramatically.

CHECK YOUR HARDINESS ZONE

An easy first step is to check your hardiness zone. The USDA maintains the **Plant Hardiness Zone Map** (see below and planthardiness.ars.usda.gov), which can be used to help determine appropriate plants for your climate. It is divided into numbered 10°F increments (further divided into two zones



Credit: *USDA Plant Hardiness Zone Map*, 2012. Agricultural Research Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture. Accessed from planthardiness.ars.usda.gov.

Why Protect Pollinators?

Pollination is essential. Globally, more than 85 percent of all flowering plant species rely on or benefit from animals, primarily insects, for pollination. These many organisms move pollen from one blossom to another, enabling the plants to produce fruit, seeds, and the next generation of flowering plants. Without pollinators, it would be impossible to maintain productive, diverse natural plant communities and ensure the functionality of our agricultural lands. Alarming, many recent studies indicate that insect pollinator populations are declining in many regions, including the United States and Europe. Some of the hardest-hit groups include bees, moths, and butterflies, important pollinators for many wild and cultivated plants, including various specialty crops. As habitat loss and degradation are the primary drivers of these declines, rebuilding wildlife-friendly landscapes is more important than ever.

That's where you come in. Gardening for wildlife is a fun and rewarding endeavor. Now more than ever, the choices we make in our own landscapes matter. While such spaces can never replace pristine natural environments, they can provide pollinators and birds with important food, nesting, and shelter resources and help reduce the many impacts of habitat fragmentation and urbanization. A growing body of research supports the wildlife-conservation benefit of these nontraditional lands. Private yards and home gardens collectively compose the largest percentage of green space in most urban areas. Additionally, as the majority of Americans now live in cities and their surrounding suburbs, yards and gardens offer tremendous potential for each of us to make a difference.

Meet the Pollinators

While bees, especially the Western Honeybee (*Apis mellifera*, also known as the European Honeybee), get most of the attention, when it comes to pollination, many other insects regularly visit flowers and serve as pollinators. The most common groups include butterflies, moths, beetles, flies, and wasps.

BEES

North America boasts some 4,000 different bee species, with several hundred species occurring in the South. With the exception of the nonnative Western Honeybee and a few other introduced species, the rest are native, and the majority of bees actually lead solitary lifestyles. They also display a wide range of sizes, colors, and behaviors, making them fascinating and attractive garden visitors. Collectively, bees are arguably the most effective and efficient insect pollinators. Beyond visiting



Southern Plants at a Glance

	COMMON NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME	LIGHT LEVEL	SOUTH HARDINESS ZONE
FULL SUN				
	Annual Phlox pg. 39	<i>Phlox drummondii</i>	full sun	6b–11a
	Antelope Horns Milkweed , pg. 41	<i>Asclepias asperula</i>	full sun	6b–9b
	Ashy Sunflower pg. 43	<i>Helianthus mollis</i>	full sun	6b–9a
	Autumn Sage pg. 45	<i>Salvia greggii</i>	full sun	6b–9b
	Baldwin's Ironweed pg. 47	<i>Vernonia baldwinii</i>	full sun	6b–9b
	Berlandier's Yellow Flax , pg. 49	<i>Linum berlandieri</i>	full sun	6b–9a
	Black-Eyed Susan pg. 51	<i>Rudbeckia hirta</i>	full sun	6b–10b
	Bluestem Prickly Poppy , pg. 53	<i>Argemone albiflora</i>	full sun	6b–10a
	Butterflyweed pg. 55	<i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>	full sun	6b–10a
	Common Hoptree pg. 57	<i>Ptelea trifoliata</i>	full sun	6b–9b
	Compass Plant pg. 59	<i>Silphium laciniatum</i>	full sun	6b–9a
	Cross Vine pg. 61	<i>Bignonia capreolata</i>	full sun	6b–9b
	Culver's Root pg. 63	<i>Veronicastrum virginicum</i>	full sun	6b–8a
	Goldenmane Tickseed pg. 65	<i>Coreopsis basalis</i>	full sun	6b–9b
	Honey Mesquite pg. 67	<i>Prosopis glandulosa</i>	full sun	6b–10a
	Indian Blanket pg. 69	<i>Gaillardia pulchella</i>	full sun	6b–11a
	Lanceleaf Coreopsis pg. 71	<i>Coreopsis lanceolata</i>	full sun	6b–9b
	Lanceleaf Fogfruit pg. 73	<i>Phyla lanceolata</i>	full sun	6b–8b
	Leadplant pg. 75	<i>Amorpha canescens</i>	full sun	6b–9a
	Leavenworth's Eryngo pg. 77	<i>Eryngium leavenworthii</i>	full sun	6b–10a



Pickerelweed



Rattlesnake Master

Full Sun



Scarlet Globemallow



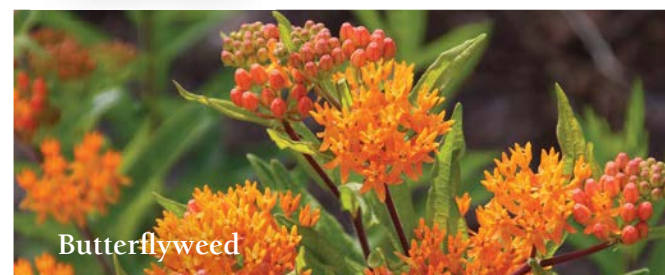
Antelope Horns Milkweed



Purple Coneflower



Culver's Root

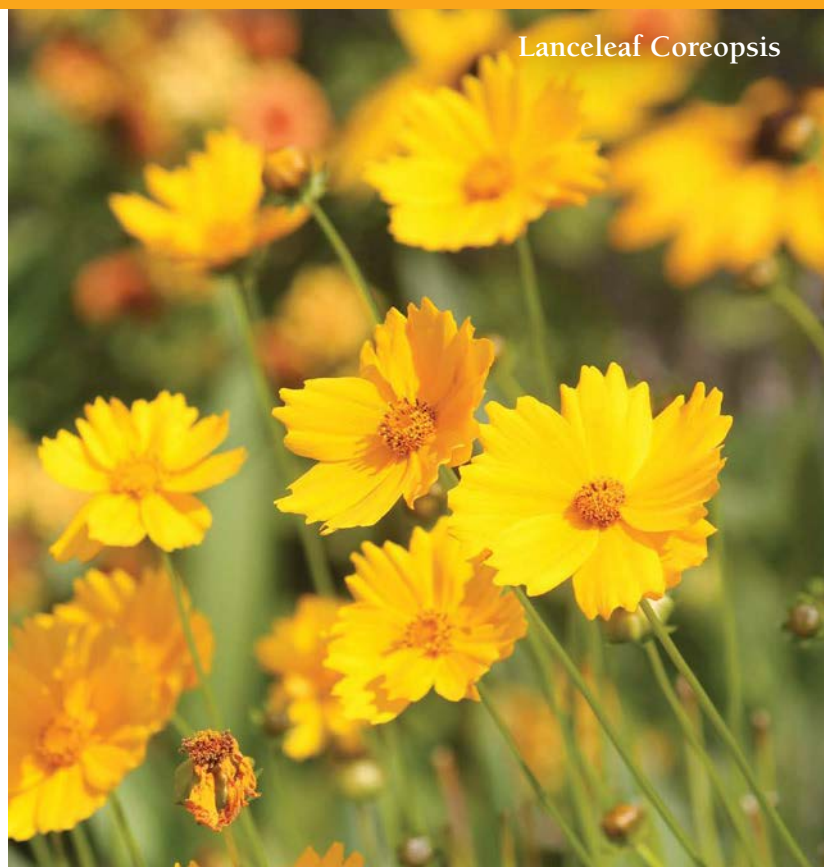


Butterflyweed



Black-Eyed Susan

From Annual Phlox (page 39) to Yellow Wild Indigo (page 127), some of the plants we associate most with pollinators and hummingbirds thrive in full sun. These plants require at least 6 hours of direct sunlight—but that's the minimum. In many cases, they produce larger and more copious blooms if they have more than 8 hours of sunlight, especially during the afternoon hours, when the sun is at its strongest.



Lanceleaf Coreopsis



Tall Blazing Star





Purple Coneflower

Scientific Name *Echinacea purpurea*

Family Asteraceae

Plant Characteristics Stout, upright, herbaceous perennial 2–5 feet tall; conspicuous, coarse, oval to lance-shaped green leaves get smaller up the stem; showy, daisylike flowers have pink to purple, somewhat droopy petals surrounding a raised, spiny center; flowers occur as individuals atop sturdy stems.

Hardiness Zones 6b–8b

Bloom Period Late spring–early fall

Growing Conditions Performs best in full sun and average to dry, well-drained soils. Although it is tolerant of poor soils and drought once established, richer garden soil and consistent moisture will enhance overall growth and flower production.

This popular native wildflower is easy to grow and an absolute must for any butterfly or pollinator garden. For Southern landscapes, it performs best in cooler, more northerly portions of the region. The stout, upright plants are well suited for everything from containers and small garden spaces to perennial borders or native naturalized meadows. A long-blooming perennial, Purple Coneflower produces a profuse show of colorful flowers that often lasts until early fall. The domed, spiny centers provide a sturdy landing platform for butterflies and other pollinators and easy access to abundant nectar. Widely available commercially, numerous striking cultivars exist in various colors. Regular deadheading of blooms encourages continued flowering. Spent flower heads provide abundant seed resources for hungry songbirds. Easily propagated by seed or root division.

Attracts hummingbirds, butterflies, bees, and many other insect pollinators; seeds are fed upon by songbirds.





Scarlet Globemallow

Scientific Name *Sphaeralcea coccinea*

Family Malvaceae

Plant Characteristics Low-spreading, herbaceous perennial up to 1 foot in height or slightly taller; small, densely hairy, deeply lobed, palmlike, gray-green to almost silvery leaves on equally hairy, slender stems; dense terminal axillary clusters of small, open, orange-to-reddish flowers, each with 5 somewhat heart-shaped petals.

Hardiness Zones 6b–9a

Bloom Period Spring–early fall

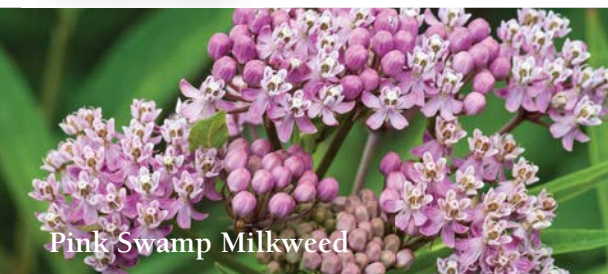
Growing Conditions Performs best in full sun and dry, well-drained soils.

This lovely, low-growing perennial is native to arid western portions of the South. Creates handsome, dense, rounded-to-sprawling clumps that exceed a foot tall. Scarlet Globemallow spreads by underground rhizomes to quickly form larger colonies, making a distinct and attractive groundcover in open sites. The tight clusters of orange-red flowers shine above distinctively silvery foliage. Offers an abundance of resources for bees and butterflies in particular. Unfortunately, deer and livestock will also readily munch away on the plant. Adapts well to various well-drained garden soils and is extremely drought-tolerant. Performs poorly in less than full sun. It is perfect for low beds, xeriscaping, and desert or rock gardens, or for naturalizing in larger, open, or disturbed sites. Spectacular en masse.

Attracts butterflies, bees, and other insect pollinators; serves as a larval host for Painted Lady (Vanessa cardui), West Coast Lady (Vanessa annabella), Gray Hairstreak (Strymon melinus), Common Checkered Skipper (Pyrgus communis), and Small Checkered Skipper (Pyrgus scriptura) butterflies.



Lyreleaf Sage

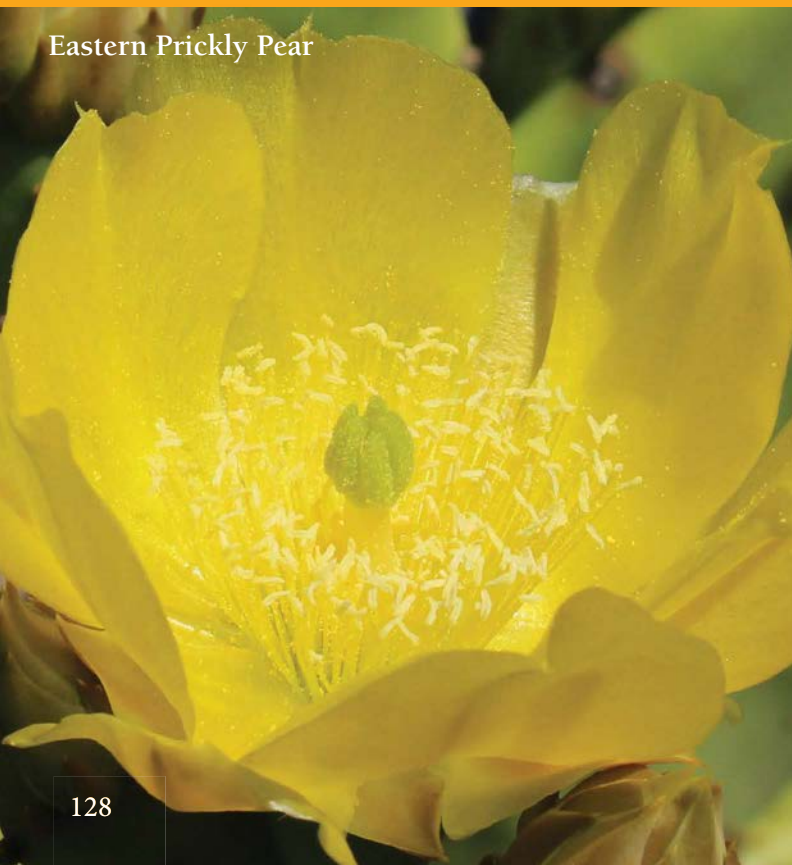


Pink Swamp Milkweed



Chickasaw Plum

Full Sun to Partial Shade



Eastern Prickly Pear



Buttonbush



Partridge Pea

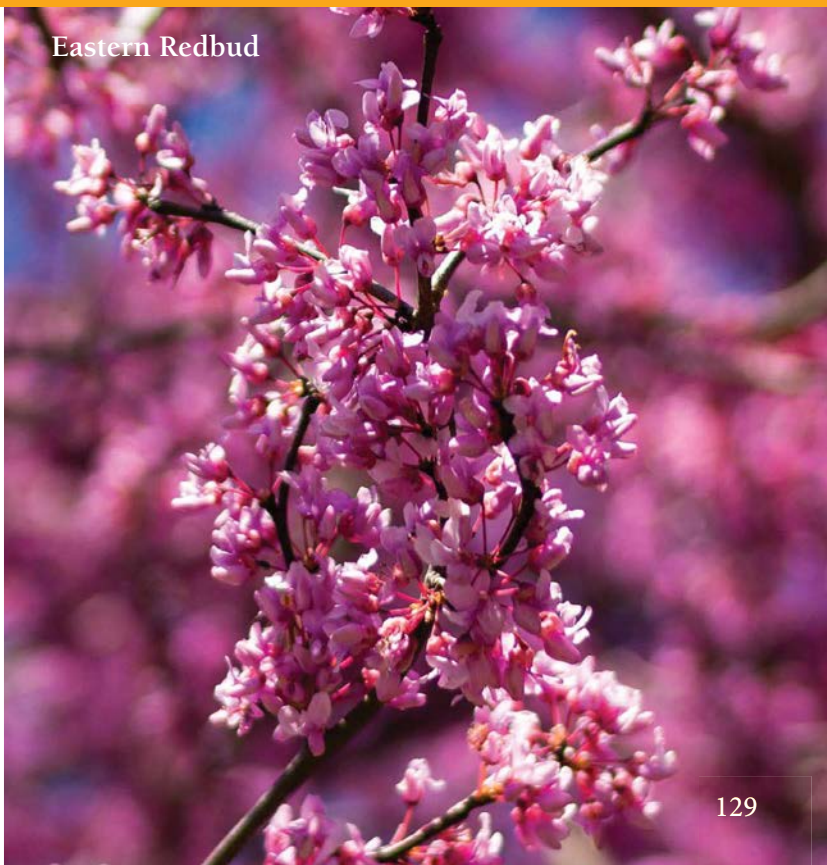


Red Maple

From American Beautyberry (page 131) to Yellow Thistle (page 239), some pollinator- and wildlife-friendly favorites are somewhat adaptive when it comes to light level, performing well in full sun to partial shade. These plants can tolerate 3–6 hours of direct sunlight per day but will often bloom more profusely with extended but not direct sunlight. Such plants are often good choices for open woodlands, forest margins, or other less-than-full-sun locations in the landscape.



Purple Passionflower



Eastern Redbud



Cardinal Flower





Cardinal Flower

Scientific Name *Lobelia cardinalis*

Family Campanulaceae

Plant Characteristics Herbaceous perennial 2–5 feet tall; lance-shaped leaves are dark green; lobed tubular flowers are bright red and grow in spikes borne on sturdy upright stalks.

Hardiness Zones 6b–9a

Bloom Period Summer–midfall

Growing Conditions Performs best in full sun to partial shade and rich, moist soils.

This stunning species is named for its vibrant, cardinal-red, tubular blossoms, which are a favorite of Ruby-Throated Hummingbirds. Some larger butterflies, such as swallowtails, also frequent the blossoms. A moisture-loving and clump-forming perennial, it is a showy addition to regularly soggy sites, rain or wetland gardens, or pond and stream borders, where it prospers in full sun to filtered shade. It is particularly stunning en masse. Cardinal Flower is adaptable to more-traditional perennial garden settings with fertile, highly organic soils as long as regular irrigation is provided. It is intolerant of drought, however, and sites where it is planted should not be allowed to dry out. Plants are short-lived and typically persist for only a few years, but they freely self-seed as well as reproduce via basal offshoots. The resulting seedlings and young plants grow quickly. Several commercial cultivars are available that vary in flower and foliage color.

Attracts hummingbirds and butterflies.





Partridge Pea

Scientific Name *Chamaecrista fasciculata*

Family Fabaceae

Plant Characteristics Upright to sprawling, herbaceous annual 1–3 feet tall; green leaves are compound, each with numerous oblong leaflets; large, butter-yellow, irregular flowers have 5 rounded petals borne in axillary clusters on reddish-green stems.

Hardiness Zones 6b–10b

Bloom Period Summer–early fall

Growing Conditions Performs best in full sun to partial shade and average to dry, well-drained soils.

An early colonizer of open, disturbed sites, Partridge Pea offers tremendous wildlife value, and its beauty as a landscape plant is often underappreciated. This durable annual tolerates poor growing conditions, establishes rapidly, and helps fix atmospheric nitrogen into the soil; as a result, it is excellent for naturalizing larger areas and is frequently used to stabilize slopes and prevent erosion. Plants have an airy, fernlike appearance that adds soft texture to the landscape and cover for wildlife. Individual leaves are somewhat sensitive to touch and tend to close when disturbed; they also close up during the heat of day to conserve moisture. The petioles possess nectar-producing glands (extrafloral nectaries). The plants produce copious amounts of seed and freely self-sow.

*Attracts ants, wasps, and other highly beneficial insects; the showy yellow flowers are particularly attractive to bees. The seed is an important food source for many songbirds, turkeys, quail, and ducks, as well as small mammals. Several butterflies, including the Gray Hairstreak (*Strymon melinus*), Cloudless Sulphur (*Phoebis sennae*), Little Yellow (*Pyrisitia lisa*), and Ceraunus Blue (*Hemiargus ceraunus*), use the plant as a larval host.*



Maryland Senna



Jewelweed

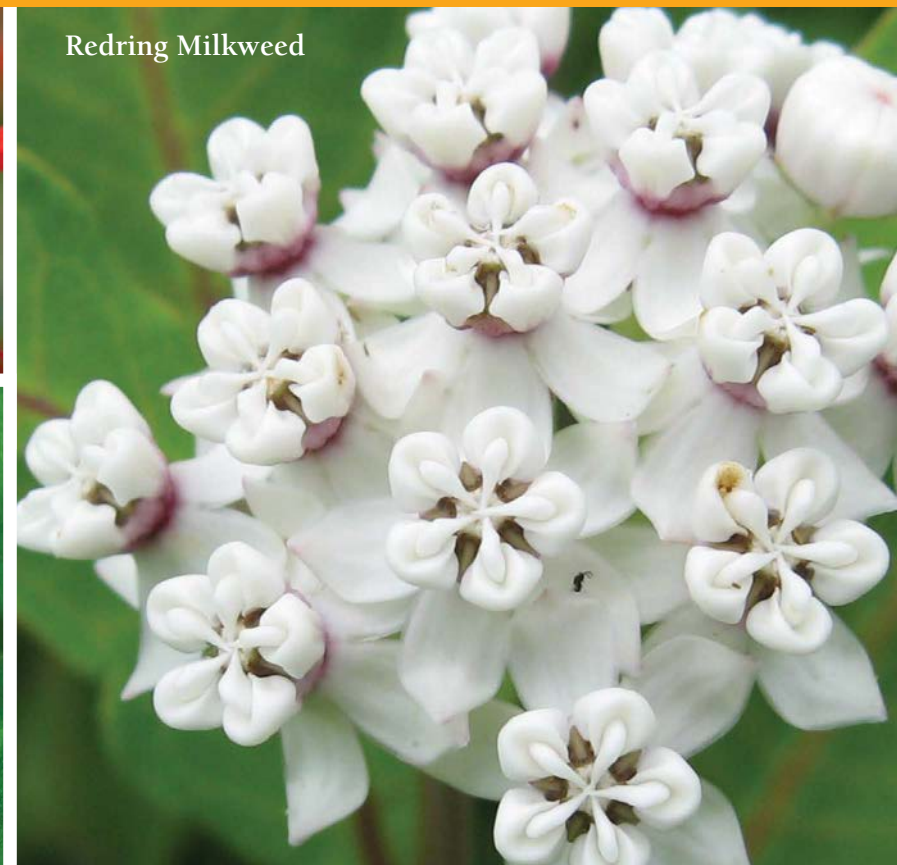
Partial Shade to Full Shade



Standing Cypress



Common Blue Violet



Redring Milkweed



False Nettle

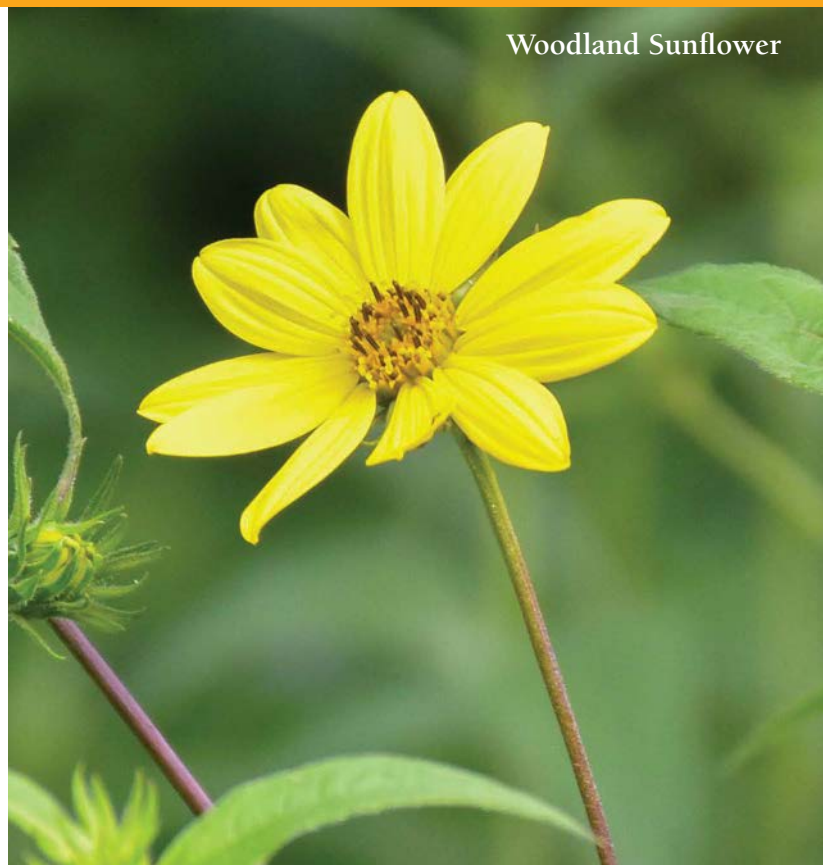


Carolina Elephant's Foot



Frostweed

From Calico Aster (page 243) to Woodland Sunflower (page 263), some good wildlife-attracting plants prefer or can tolerate lower light levels. These plants often perform best with 3–6 hours of direct sunlight per day or less. In many cases, they benefit from some sun in the morning or evening, when light intensity is reduced, but they are sensitive to too much sun—which can lead to increased stress, dehydration, and even scorching. These plants are often best used along forest margins, under larger trees, in woodland gardens, or in north-facing border gardens.



Woodland Sunflower



Calico Aster





Redring Milkweed

Scientific Name *Asclepias variegata*

Family Apocynaceae

Plant Characteristics Upright, unbranched perennial up to 3 feet in height or taller; wide, dark-green, oblong to elliptical leaves have slightly lighter veins and often somewhat wavy margins; dense, globular terminal clusters of fragrant, pure-white flowers; the plant forms compact, multistemmed clumps over time.

Hardiness Zones 6b–9b

Bloom Period Late spring–early summer

Growing Conditions Partial shade and dry, well-drained soils.

This is yet another garden-worthy native milkweed that deserves consideration. Found naturally in open woodlands, rocky slopes, thickets, and forest margins, Redring Milkweed performs best with at least some shade. Although the flowers appear pure white from a distance, each does bear a narrow, purple to reddish ring between the petals and the corona (the upper part of each flower) that gives this species its unique common name. The showy blooms are both fragrant and nectar-rich, making them a favorite of many insect visitors. The plant forms compact, multistemmed clumps over time that are an attractive addition to smaller garden spaces and that work well for naturalizing en masse.

Attracts butterflies, bees, and other insect pollinators; serves as a host plant for the Monarch butterfly.





Woodland Sunflower

Scientific Name *Helianthus divaricatus*

Family Asteraceae

Plant Characteristics: Upright, herbaceous perennial 3–6 feet in height; lance-shaped, yellow-green leaves taper to a short point, occurring as opposite pairs on stiff, reddish-brown stems; large terminal flower heads with bright-yellow petals surround a golden center.

Hardiness Zones 6b–8b

Bloom Period Summer–early fall

Growing Conditions Performs best in partial shade and average to dry, well-drained soils.

As its name suggests, this is a widespread and common wildflower of dry, open woodlands; forest clearings; and forest borders. The stiff, slender stems boast rough, yellow-green leaves and add both height and texture to shadier areas of the landscape. Starting in summer, the statuesque plants begin producing numerous golden flowers that brighten wooded sites or nearby meadows. The attractive, typically sunflower-looking blooms are frequently visited by a variety of insect pollinators. Plants spread vigorously by underground rhizomes and can expand into sizable colonies over time, making this species useful for naturalizing. Its aggressive nature though can quickly overwhelm smaller garden spaces. Woodland Sunflower is easy to grow and quite adaptable to a variety of conditions, requiring little maintenance once established. Serves as a larval host for Gorgone Checkerspot (*Chlosyne gorgone*) and Silvery Checkerspot (*Chlosyne nycteis*) butterflies. Pale-leaf Woodland Sunflower (*Helianthus strumosus*) is a similar-looking and equally landscape-worthy species.

Attracts butterflies, bees, and other insect pollinators; various songbirds feed on the seeds.

Garden Plants for Butterflies

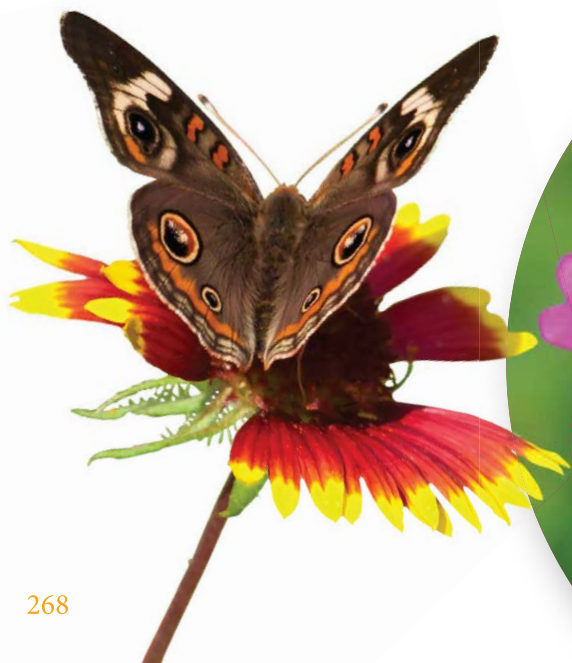
- 1 **Maryland Senna** (*Senna marilandica*), pg. 255
- 2 **Rattlesnake Master** (*Eryngium yuccifolium*), pg. 97
- 3 **Purple Coneflower** (*Echinacea purpurea*), pg. 89
- 4 **Giant Ironweed** (*Vernonia gigantea*), pg. 171
- 5 **Eastern Bluestar** (*Amsonia tabernaemontana*), pg. 157
- 6 **Pink Swamp Milkweed** (*Asclepias incarnata*), pg. 199
- 7 **Butterflyweed** (*Asclepias tuberosa*), pg. 55
- 8 **Blue Mistflower** (*Conoclinium coelestinum*), pg. 137
- 9 **Lanceleaf Coreopsis** (*Coreopsis lanceolata*), pg. 71
- 10 **Hollow Joe Pye Weed** (*Eutrochium fistulosum*), pg. 179
- 11 **Annual Phlox** (*Phlox drummondii*), pg. 39
- 12 **Autumn Sage** (*Salvia greggii*), pg. 45
- 13 **Golden Alexanders** (*Zizia aurea*), pg. 173
- 14 **Foxglove Beardtongue** (*Penstemon digitalis*), pg. 169
- 15 **Salt Heliotrope** (*Heliotropium curassavicum*), pg. 101
- 16 **Purple Passionflower** (*Passiflora incarnata*), pg. 201
- 17 **Black-Eyed Susan** (*Rudbeckia hirta*), pg. 51
- 18 **West Indian Shrub Verbena** (*Lantana urticoides*), pg. 123
- 19 **Tall Blazing Star** (*Liatris aspera*), pg. 115





Container Garden for Pollinators

- 1 **Scarlet Sage** (*Salvia coccinea*), pg. 215
- 2 **Rose Mock Vervain** (*Glandularia canadensis*), pg. 99
- 3 **Black-Eyed Susan** (*Rudbeckia hirta*), pg. 51
- 4 **Pink Swamp Milkweed** (*Asclepias incarnata*), pg. 199
- 5 **Indian Blanket** (*Gaillardia pulchella*), pg. 69





Plan Your Landscape or Garden to Help Pollinators

THE PRESENCE OF BIRDS, BEES, AND BUTTERFLIES

suggests a healthy, earth-friendly place. Turn your yard into a perfect habitat that attracts pollinators and helps them thrive. Learn how to landscape and create pollinator gardens with widely available perennials that are easy to care for and provide great benefits for wildlife.

Inside You'll Find

- Overview of native pollinator species in the South
- Field guide to 111 native plants, organized by level of sunlight needed
- Quick-reference chart to plants, blooming periods, and what animals each plant attracts
- Hardiness zone information, weed control tips, and more
- **BONUS:** Garden plans that can be customized to suit your specific interests



**Plan, plant, and grow your beautiful garden.
Then watch and enjoy your favorite backyard guests.**

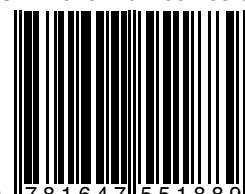


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