

BUTTERFLY NECTAR SOURCES: NECTAR-RICH CONNECTICUT NATIVE¹ PLANTS

The following species are native¹ in Connecticut. Many are rather large for garden settings and some spread aggressively. **The symbol % indicates plants that are exceptionally unruly in gardens.**

- When purchasing these plants for use in restoring natural areas, it is important to make sure to get plants grown from local seed stock as well as from site types similar to the intended planting site.
- The addition of a variety or subspecies to the Scientific Name indicates that additional varieties or subspecies exist in the USA but those other ones are not native in Connecticut. Be aware that plants imported from other parts of the country may not be labeled down to variety or subspecies because it is already known to the locals what variety is locally native.
- Note that cultivars (with names in single quotes) do not represent the full genetic diversity of typical natives.

In the list below, heights are given in feet (') or inches (") for plants growing in natural habitats.

COMMON NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME	HEIGHT
Shrubs/Trees		
Blueberries; e.g.,	<i>Vaccinium</i> spp.	
Highbush-blueberry	<i>V. corymbosum</i>	6'-15'
Low Bush Blueberry	<i>V. angustifolium</i>	6"-24"
Buttonbush	<i>Cephalanthus occidentalis</i>	(3'-)5'-6'(-10')
Meadowsweet ²	<i>Spiraea alba</i> var. <i>latifolia</i> ²	2'-5'
New Jersey Tea	<i>Ceanothus americanus</i>	2'-4'
Steeplebush (Hardhack) ²	<i>Spiraea tomentosa</i> var. <i>tomentosa</i> ²	2'-4'
Sumacs; e.g.,	<i>Rhus</i> spp.	
Smooth Sumac	<i>R. glabra</i>	2'-20'
Staghorn Sumac	<i>R. typhina</i>	max. 40'
Sweet Pepperbush	<i>Clethra alnifolia</i>	3'-10'
Wild Azaleas; e.g.,	certain <i>Rhododendrons</i>	
Pinxter-flower	<i>R. periclymenoides</i>	2'-8'
	(formerly <i>R. nudiflorum</i>)	
Swamp Azalea	<i>R. viscosum</i>	3'-8'
Wild Plum	<i>Prunus americana</i>	max. 35'
Wild Cherries; e.g.,		
Fire (= Pin) Cherry	<i>Prunus pensylvanica</i> var. <i>pensylvanica</i>	max. 35'
Wild Cherry	<i>Prunus serotina</i> var. <i>serotina</i>	max. 90'
{Note: Wild Cherry leaves, twigs, seeds toxic if ingested}		
Perennials		
Asters; e.g.,	formerly <i>Aster</i> spp.	
Calico Aster	<i>Symphotrichum lateriflorum</i> var. <i>lateriflorum</i>	
	(formerly <i>Aster lateriflorus</i>)	1'-5'
Heath Aster	<i>Symphotrichum ericoides</i> var. <i>ericoides</i>	
	(formerly <i>Aster ericoides</i>)	1'-3'
New England Aster	<i>Symphotrichum novae-angliae</i>	
	(formerly <i>Aster novae-angliae</i>)	1'-3'
New York Aster	<i>Symphotrichum novi-belgii</i>	
	(formerly <i>Aster novi-belgii</i>)	3'-7'
Smooth Aster	<i>Symphotrichum laeve</i>	
	(formerly <i>Aster laevis</i>)	1'-3'
Stiff Aster	<i>Ionactis linariifolius</i>	
	(formerly <i>Aster linariifolius</i>)	6"-18"

COMMON NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME	HEIGHT
Bergamot, Wild	<i>Monarda fistulosa</i> ssp. <i>fistulosa</i>	2'-3'
Blackberries; e.g., Highbush (or Sow-teat) Blackberry%	<i>Rubus</i> spp. <i>R. allegheniensis</i>	2'-8'
Boneset	<i>Eupatorium perfoliatum</i> var. <i>perfoliatum</i>	2'-4'
Butterfly-weed (Orange)	<i>Asclepias tuberosa</i> ssp. <i>tuberosa</i> or <i>A. tuberosa</i> ssp. <i>interior</i>	1'-2'
Coneflower, Green-headed (= Tall or Cut-leaved Coneflower.	<i>Rudbeckia laciniata</i> var. <i>laciniata</i> Note that no other Coneflowers are native to Connecticut)	3'-12'
Dogbane%; e.g., Indian Hemp% {poisonous} Spreading Dogbane% {poisonous}	<i>Apocynum</i> spp. {poisonous} <i>A. cannabinum</i> <i>A. androsaemifolium</i>	1'-4' 1'-4'
Goldenrods; e.g., Blue-stemmed Goldenrod Gray Goldenrod Rough-leaved (= Square-stem) G. Seaside Goldenrod Sweet Goldenrod Zigzag Goldenrod	<i>Solidago</i> spp. <i>S. caesia</i> var. <i>caesia</i> <i>S. nemoralis</i> var. <i>nemoralis</i> <i>S. patula</i> var. <i>patula</i> <i>S. sempervirens</i> var. <i>sempervirens</i> <i>S. odora</i> var. <i>odora</i> <i>S. flexicaulis</i>	1'-3' 6"-30" 2'-7' 1'-8' 2'-4' 1'-3'
Joe-Pye Weeds Hollow Joe-Pye Weed Joe-Pye Weed Purple Joe-Pye Weed Spotted Joe-Pye Weed	certain <i>Eupatoriums</i> <i>E. fistulosum</i> <i>E. dubium</i> <i>E. purpureum</i> var. <i>purpureum</i> <i>E. maculatum</i> var. <i>maculatum</i>	2'-7' 2'-5' 3'-10' 2'-6'
Milkweeds; e.g., Butterfly-weed (Orange) Common Milkweed% Swamp Milkweed	<i>Asclepias</i> <i>A. tuberosa</i> var. <i>tuberosa</i> or <i>A. tuberosa</i> ssp. <i>interior</i> <i>A. syriaca</i> <i>A. incarnata</i> var. <i>incarnata</i> or var. <i>pulchra</i> (a hairy variety)	1'-2' 2'-5' 2'-4'
Pearly Everlasting Strawberry, Wild% Vervain, Blue	<i>Anaphalis margaritacea</i> <i>Fragaria virginiana</i> var. <i>virginiana</i> <i>Verbena hastata</i> var. <i>hastata</i>	1'-3' 3"-6" 2'-6'
Grasses Purpletop	<i>Tridens flavus</i> (very often planted from non-local sources)	2'-5'

NOTES

^{1/} Used in an ecological sense, the word "**native**" refers to species that are a part of the native (sometimes called "indigenous") ecosystems in which ecological relationships among plants and animals and their environment (including pollination, food chains, and nutrient cycling; etc.) developed into a balance over many generations. In contrast to these native species, many familiar plants of New England roadsides are non-native, "naturalized" species. "Naturalized" refers to the descendants of introduced plants that were able to survive, reproduce, and spread without human help. Even though naturalized plants often grow quite well in their new territories, they are not part of the indigenous ecosystems in the places where they have been introduced (and, in fact, certain naturalized plants are disruptive of native ecosystems). The above list of plants includes only plants actually native to Connecticut.

^{2/} The genus *Spiraea* has been described as not attractive to butterflies in eastern Massachusetts and the New York City area.

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