

butterfly garden resource list for southeastern pennsylvania, growing zone 7a — researched & prepared by jennifer hetrick (JH) of hetrickmedia.com
 [version 2.x.26; please check for updated & expanded version at least once a year]

butterfly garden plants list	recommendation source	perennial, annual, vine, shrub, etc.	native versus not	host or attractor	sun exposure needs	size maximum	special notes	nursery/garden center (call first to check availability)
late-flowering boneset (botanical name)	dreyabae & pbe							
big leaf mountain mint (botanical name)	dreyabae & pbe	perennial					JH first planted late in 2025	
jeana phlox (botanical name)	dreyabae	perennial						
“solar cascade” goldenrod (botanical name)	dreyabae	perennial					this is a more well-behaving versus aggressively spreading variety?	
golden alexander (botanical name)	dreyabae	perennial					JH first planted late in 2025	
wild ageratum; blue mist (conoclinium coelestium)	pottstown butterfly expert	perennial		spell-check and fact-check it all!	also list all latin names and common ones consistently			behmerwald nursery in schwenkstile
common names (verbena bonariensis)	pottstown butterfly expert	annual (perennial in southern states)	native to South America	attractor for nectar			local nurseries often don't want to sell it because it's a perennial but only an annual in our region	order online via shipping as a plant or order as seeds to grow
mexican sunflower (tithonia)	pottstown butterfly expert	?		attractor for nectar				glick's greenhouse in oley
butterfly bush (buddleia)	pottstown butterfly expert	shrub		attractor for nectar			all are good but white is the best attractor?	

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common milkweed (botanical name)	dreyabae & pbe	perennial		host for monarch butterfly			may need staking from wind; you can dig it up to transplant, but it has a taproot, so it's hard to not kill it by cutting it wrong unless it's young	glick's greenhouse in oley
swamp milkweed (white-flowering; also, pink-flowering) (botanical name)	dreyabae & pbe	perennial		host for monarch butterfly			can be grown in soil in a kiddie pool with holes drilled into the bottom for drainage and less spreading	glick's greenhouse in oley
field thistle	pottstown butterfly expert						hm...thistle?????	
state fair zinnia mix (zinnia elegans)	pottstown butterfly expert	annual	cultivar	attractor for nectar				
purple coneflowers (echinacea)	pottstown butterfly expert	perennial	native					
dutchman's pipevine (botanical name)	dreyabae & pbe	vine		host for pipeline swallowtail butterfly			you need a lot of this plant & its leaves to feed these caterpillars or risk running out of food supply or them	
mammoth dill (botanical name)	dreyabae & pbe			host for eastern black swallowtail butterfly				
flat-leaf italian & curly parsley (botanical name)	dreyabae & pbe			host for eastern black swallowtail butterfly				
false sunflower; oxeye (heliopsis helianthoides)	JRH	perennial	native	attractor for nectar				
fennel (botanical name)	dreyabae & pbe			host for eastern black swallowtail butterfly				

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queen anne's lace botanical name)		perennial		host for eastern black swallowtail butterfly				
spicebush tree? botanical name)	pottstown butterfly expert	tree		host for spicebush swallowtail butterfly				
stinging nettles botanical name)	pottstown butterfly expert			host for red admiral butterfly				
black cherry botanical name)	pottstown butterfly expert	tree		host for tiger swallowtail butterfly				
poplar botanical name)	pottstown butterfly expert	tree		host for tiger swallowtail butterfly				
hops botanical name)	pottstown butterfly expert			host for comma butterfly & giant swallowtail butterfly				
paw paw botanical name)	pottstown butterfly expert	tree		zebra swallowtail butterfly				
rue botanical name)	pottstown butterfly expert			host for giant swallowtail butterfly				
gas – ??? typo?	pottstown butterfly expert			host for giant swallowtail butterfly				
prickly ash botanical name)	pottstown butterfly expert			host for giant swallowtail butterfly				
senna botanical name)	pottstown butterfly expert			host for sleepy orange butterfly & cloudless sulphur butterfly				
red cedar botanical name)	pottstown butterfly expert	tree		host for olive hairstreak butterfly				
willow botanical name)	pottstown butterfly expert	tree		host for red-spotted purple butterfly & mourning cloak butterfly				
hackberry botanical name)	pottstown butterfly expert			host for mourning cloak butterfly				
elm botanical name)	pottstown butterfly expert	tree		host for mourning cloak butterfly				

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pearly everlasting botanical name)	pottstown butterfly expert			host for american painted lady butterfly				
butterfly weed botanical name)	jen & dreyebae							
rotting fruit with cuts in it—apples, bananas	pottstown butterfly expert	produce for humans		attractor for comma, question mark, tawny emperor, red admiral, red-spotted purple, hackberry, viceroy, & mourning cloak butterflies				