











BUTTERFLY HABITAT GUIDE





As an integral component of our ecosystem, butterflies rely on native plants for food, shelter, and reproduction. By selecting the appropriate plants and cultivating a hospitable environment, residents can play a significant role in supporting local butterfly and wildlife species and promoting biodiversity. Together, we can create a network of thriving butterfly habitats throughout San Diego County, contributing to the long-term health and resilience of our local ecosystems.

The County of San Diego is in the process of creating the Butterflies Habitat Conservation Plan and the Native Landscape Program. Both of these pursuits are on a regional scale and go hand in hand with creating diverse conservation within the San Diego County region.

This guide provides information on host species that can be planted to create habitat for several butterfly species found in San Diego County. Additional butterflies and their host plants can be found using the [California Butterflies and Native Host Plants](#) database provided by the California Native Plant Society. For more information, email MSCP@sdcounty.ca.gov or visit the [Butterflies Habitat Conservation Plan Webpage](#) or [Native Landscape Program Webpage](#).

Species	Host Plants	Range* *based on historic data
 <p>Hermes copper (<i>Lycaena hermes</i>)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spiny redberry (<i>Rhamnus crocea</i>) • California buckwheat (<i>Eriogonum fasciculatum</i>) 	<p>North SD County near I-15 and Gopher Canyon Road southward through the central coastal areas to near the U.S.-Mexico border</p>
 <p>Quino checkerspot (<i>Euphydryas editha quino</i>)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dwarf plantain (<i>Plantago erecta</i>) • Woolly plantain (<i>Plantago patagonica</i>) • Purple owl's clover (<i>Castilleja exserta</i>) • Chinese houses (<i>Collinsia concolor</i>) 	<p>North boundary of SD County through Mission Trails south to U.S - Mexico border and eastward through Tecate</p>
 <p>Harbison's dunn skipper (<i>Euphyes vestris harbisoni</i>)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • San Diego sedge (<i>Carex spissa</i>) 	<p>Camp Pendleton and Fallbrook south to the Tecate Peak area near the U.S.-Mexico border</p>
 <p>Monarch (<i>Danaus plexippus</i>)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Showy milkweed (<i>Asclepias speciosa</i>) • Narrow-leaf milkweed (<i>Asclepias fascicularis</i>) • Woollypod milkweed (<i>Asclepias eriocarpa</i>) • California milkweed (<i>Asclepias californica</i>) • <u>DO NOT PLANT</u> tropical milkweed (<i>Asclepias curassavica</i>) 	<p>Migratory species that can be found County-wide</p>

Species	Host Plants	Range* *based on historic data
 <p>Swallowtails (<i>Papilio</i> spp.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Western sycamore (<i>Platanus racemosa</i>) • Hollyleaf cherry (<i>Prunus ilicifolia</i>) • White alder (<i>Alnus rhombifolia</i>) 	County-wide
 <p>Painted lady (<i>Vanessa cardui</i>)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desert globemallow (<i>Sphaeralcea ambigua</i>) • Douglas' fiddleneck (<i>Amsinckia douglasiana</i>) • Lupine (<i>Lupinus</i> spp.) 	County-wide
 <p>California dogface (<i>Zerene eurydice</i>)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • California false indigo (<i>Amorpha californica</i>) 	County-wide
 <p>Sonoran blue (<i>Philotes sonorensis</i>)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dudleya (<i>Dudleya</i> spp.) 	County-wide

Species	Host Plants	Range* *based on historic data
 <p>Common buckeye (<i>Junonia coenia</i>)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monkeyflower (<i>Mimulus/Diplacus</i> spp.) • Showy penstemon (<i>Penstemon spectabilis</i>) • Purple owl's clover (<i>Castilleja exserta</i>) 	<p>County-wide, excluding deserts</p>
 <p>Sleepy orange (<i>Abaeis nicippe</i>)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desert senna (<i>Senna armata</i>) • Cove's cassia (<i>Senna covesii</i>) 	<p>County-wide</p>
 <p>Mourning cloak (<i>Nymphalis antiopa</i>)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Willow (<i>Salix</i> spp.) • Fremont cottonwood (<i>Populus fremontii</i>) • Ash (<i>Fraxinus</i> spp.) 	<p>Coast to mountain foothills</p>
 <p>Sara orangetip (<i>Anthocharis sara</i>)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wallflowers (<i>Erysimum</i> spp.) • Rockcress (<i>Boechea</i> spp.) • Milk maids (<i>Cardamine californica</i>) 	<p>County-wide</p>