The Butterfly Society of Virginia Presents: Attracting Butterflies to Your Backyard and the Host Plants for Their Caterpillars
Nectar plants are used to attract the adult butterflies. Basically anything with a flower is a nectar source, however some nectar plants are much better than others.

While there are good arguments for the use of only native plants, most gardens have a mix of both native and non-native.
Nectar Plants
Queen Anne’s Lace       Purple Cone Flower
Button Bush  Penta  Lantana

(Chapel Hill)
Lantana (Ms. Huff)  Sedum
Blue Salvia

Aster
Fennel

Buddleia

Butterfly Bush
Joe Pye Weed

Boneset
Brazilian Verbena
Monarda or Bee Balm  Zinnia  Mountain Mint
Check out all the pollinators on this fennel
Host Plants

These are the plants that the caterpillars need as food. Many species feed on just one or two types of plants.
The Monarch Butterfly *Danaus plexippus*
Milkweed

Swamp Milkweed
Asclepias incarnata

Butterfly Weed
Asclepias tuberosa

Common Milkweed
Asclepias syriaca
Monarch eggs
Early instar monarch caterpillars
Late instar monarch caterpillars
Eastern Black Swallowtail *Papilio polyxenes* caterpillars feed on several related plants.
Fennel, Parsley, Queen Anne’s Lace, Rue, dill, carrot...

All of these are host plants for the Eastern Black Swallowtail
and Golden Alexander *Zizzia aurea*

A native food plant for the Black Swallowtail
Many people focus on the Monarch or the Black Swallowtail when planting for caterpillars...
...But if you plant it, they will come!

Passion Vine *Passiflora incarnata/Passiflora caerulea*

There is are tropical and native species

The caterpillar host plant for the Gulf Fritillary *Agraulis vanillae* and the Variegated Fritillary *Euptoieta claudia*!
Gulf Fritillary: egg, larva, adult
the Variegated Fritillary.
Spicebush *Lindera benzoin* and Sassafras *Sassafras albidum* the host plant for the Spicebush Swallowtail *Papilio troilus*
Spicebush Swallowtail *Papilio troilus*

Female

Male
To find caterpillars look for folded leaftips
or,
for later instar caterpillars, rolled leaves
The late instar caterpillars are well known and easily recognizable.
Native Honeysuckle *Lonicera sempervirens* the host plant for the Snowberry Clearwing moth *Hemaris diffinis*

“Major Wheeler”                  “John Clayton”
Cassia *Cassia bicapsularis* or sicklepod the host plant for Cloudless Sulphur *Phoebus sennae* and Sleepy Orange *Eurema nicippe*

Two for one!!!
And you will only need to plant one…
Cloudless Sulphur *Phoebus sennae*
and Sleepy Orange *Eurema nicippe*
Pawpaw *Asimina triloba*

The only food plant for the Zebra Swallowtail!
Pentas *Pentas Lanceolata*

Host plant for the Tersa Sphinx *Xylophanes tersa*
Wild Black Cherry

*Prunus serotina* and Tulip Poplar

*Liriodendron tulipifera*
Are the host plants for the Eastern Tiger Swallowtail *Papilio glaucus* melanistic female
Wild Black Cherry *Prunus serotine* is also a host plant to the Red-spotted Purple *Limenitis arthemis*

There are 2 early instar caterpillars in this photo
Dutchman’s Pipe (Pipevine)
Aristolochia macrophylla and Virginia Snakeroot
Aristolochia serpentaria
Host plants for the Pipevine Swallowtail *Battus philenor*
The End!

Be sure to visit the Butterfly Society of Virginia Webpage for more information.
https://www.butterflysocietyofva.org/

Also check out the Butterfly Society of Virginia on Facebook