Butterfly Garden Adventure
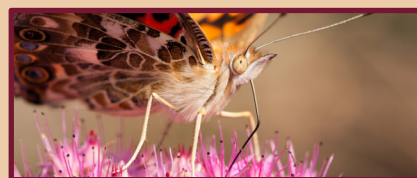
Wander the *Harriet K. Maxwell* Desert Wildflower Loop trail to discover how butterflies use plants to eat, grow and survive in their life cycle.

Host Plants

Find plants that caterpillars can eat.

Caterpillars have two jobs: to eat and grow. The plant they eat is called their **host plant**; its the only plant the caterpillars can eat to survive. Monarch caterpillars rely on their host plant, the milkweed. This is where monarch butterflies lay their eggs.

If you could only eat one thing, what would it be?

Nectar Plants

Find flowering plants that provide nectar.

Adult butterflies drink **nectar** from flowers through their straw-like tongue called a *proboscis*. They use their antennae and super color vision to find blooms. Flat, clustered flowers that are easier to land on are their favorite.
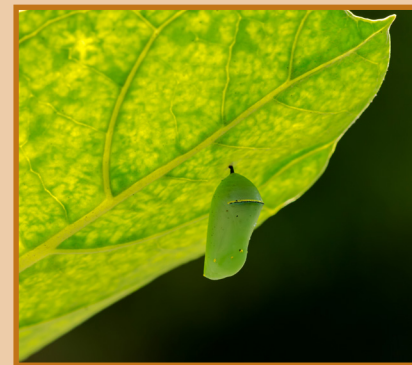
Use your senses. What colors do you see? Describe what you smell.

Shelter Plants

Find leafy, shady plants that can provide shelter.

Shelter plants are trees or shrubs that can protect butterflies from wind, rain and predators. Butterflies need shelter plants at all stages of their life. Caterpillars often find a shelter plant when they are ready to form their chrysalis.

Look at the plants around you. Where would you want to hide?

Did you know?

Did you see a butterfly or caterpillar? Sometimes they are hard to spot.

Camouflage helps insects like butterflies blend into their surroundings, or tricks predators into thinking they are something they are not. One example: Giant Swallowtail caterpillars look like bird poop. They can hide in plain sight thanks to this clever disguise.

What would your camoflauge look like?

Draw Your Own Butterfly Garden

Use what you learned today to imagine your own butterfly garden at home. Find the downloadable activity on the next page!

DESERT BOTANICAL *garden*®

Draw Your Own Butterfly Garden

Use what you learned to create your own butterfly garden. Remember: butterflies need nectar, shelter and host plants to survive. Don't forget to add your own beautiful butterflies too!