


# Top 10 Herbaceous Plants for Your Wildlife Garden



Goldenrod · *Solidago* ·  

**Why:** There are 125 species of goldenrod native to the US, supporting 115 species of butterflies and moths (Lepidoptera) as well as spiders and birds.

**Native examples:** Canada, Atlantic, white, wreath, showy, aniscented



Aster · *Aster* ·  

**Why:** Huge family of flowers which support 109 Lepidopteran species; provide abundant pollen for bees and butterflies with range of bloom periods. **Native examples:** blue wood, big leaf, heath, New England, zigzag




Sunflower · *Helianthus* ·  

**Why:** Provide lots of nectar and pollen, and the seeds are eaten by many birds including finches, sparrows, chickadees, nuthatches, titmice, cardinals.

**Native examples:** common, thinleaf, woodland, hairy, cheerful, prairie




Joe-pye weed · *Eupatorium* 

**Why:** Best native alternative to invasive Butterfly Bush; produces tons of pollen and nectar for butterflies while feeding 41 caterpillar species as well.

**Native examples:** hollow, sweet, three-nerved




Sedges · *Carex* · 

**Why:** Many native sedges are endangered; support 36 species of Lepidopterans; often neglected but essential element for wildlife in our gardens.

**Native examples:** thicket, broadwing, whiteninge, eastern narrowleaf




Violets · *Viola* · 

**Why:** Violets are host plants for a group of endangered butterflies, the Fritillaries; choose several species for early spring color and wildlife habitat.

**Native examples:** common blue, arrowleaf, roundleaf yellow, early blue



Switch grass · *Panicum* · 

**Why:** Leaves and other plant parts provide food for 25 species of moths and butterflies; the perfect groundcover to prevent weeds and provide shelter

**Native examples:** switch grass, Shenandoah



Geranium · *Geranium* · 

**Why:** This shade-loving perennial is a favorite of pollinators including specialist bees, and is fed on by the Bridled Arches moth and 23 other species. **Native examples:** wild geranium




Milkweed · *Asclepias* · 

**Why:** It's the specialized food of the threatened Monarch butterfly as well as 11 other species of butterflies and moths, and many other pollinators.

**Native examples:** common, swamp, butterfly weed



Black/brown-eyed Susan, coneflower · *Rudbeckia* 

**Why:** Maryland's state flower is a bird favorite, providing seeds for goldfinches, blue jays, and cardinals, as well as nectar for bees and butterflies. **Native examples:** blackeyed Susan, browneyed Susan, cutleaf coneflower