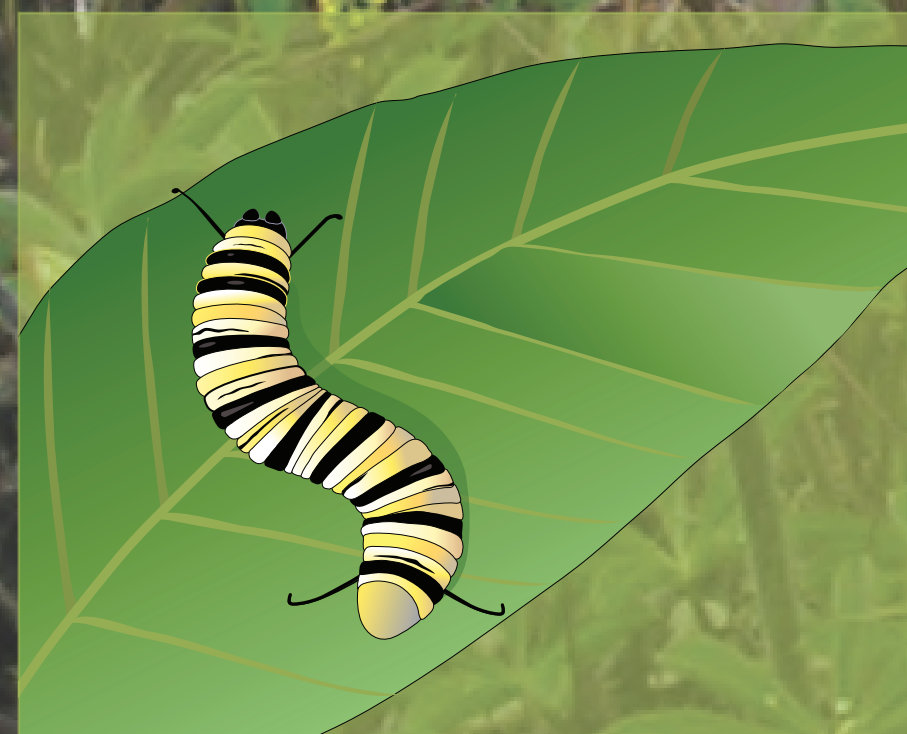


# Butterflies in the Garden

Here you can admire caterpillars chewing leaves of their favorite host (food) plant, and butterflies sipping nectar from flowers. Can you find these four common species?

1. Monarch caterpillars are picky eaters feeding only on milkweed plants, some of which are toxic. Bold striping warns would-be predators that the caterpillar is toxic too.
2. A variable checkerspot caterpillar can be seen munching the foliage of sticky monkey bush, California bee plant, or English plantain. When it evolves into a butterfly its diet is even more varied.
3. Western tiger swallowtail caterpillars feed on willows around the reservoir. As butterflies they visit the garden to sip nectar. Like most butterflies they prefer yellow, orange, purple, and pink flowers.
4. Acmon blue caterpillars can eat buckwheat and pea plants. As butterflies, they move their hind wings while sipping nectar. This movement confuses hungry birds, causing them to strike at the butterfly's tail rather than head.

235 species of butterflies live in California. Planting caterpillar host and butterfly nectar plants invites them into your garden and expands natural butterfly habitats.



Butterfly photos: Bob Stewart  
Meadow photo: Nick Cavagnaro  
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