

Planting flowers for butterflies

What colors does a butterfly see?

Bees and butterflies don't see as clearly as humans do, but they can see colors that we can't see. Their range of color vision extends into the **ultraviolet**. The petals of the flowers they pollinate have special **ultraviolet** patterns which guide the insects deep into the flower.

What color do butterflies like?

Butterflies have shown an amazing range of color preference between the various species, but as a general rule, flowers that are white, pink, purple, red, yellow and orange attract the most butterflies. Blue to green flowers are universally the least favorite flower color.

What shape of flower do butterflies prefer?

Butterflies are larger than most nectar gatherers and they don't hover like some flies or bees. They prefer a flower that is open and flat or clustered together providing a landing pad. Members of the **Daisy family** (Asteraceae) are important sources of forage for insects. Daisy flowers are in fact compound flower heads made up of hundreds of tiny flowers or 'florets' all tightly packed together.

Some Science about Butterfly vision

Each of their eyes, scientists report in *Frontiers in Ecology and Evolution*, contains [at least 15 different types of photoreceptors](#), the light-detecting cells required for color vision. Most insect species have only three classes of photoreceptors. Butterflies need only four receptor classes for color vision, including spectra in the UV region. So why did this species evolve 11 more?

With eyes alert to the slightest variation in the blue-green spectrum, male bluebottles can spot and chase their rivals, even when they're flying against a blue sky.