

**Butterflies in Idell's Garden
2004**

Note: I am away during the day, so see butterflies only on weekends or warmer evenings. A question mark (?) after a name means uncertain identification.

Time of Year column: see full references at end (T) Tilden's *Butterflies of the San Francisco Bay Region*, (D) *Butterfly List Mt Diablo*; (BA) *Local Butterflies of the San Francisco Bay Area*; (USGS) website; ; (El Sob) when my garden has a different time.

Butterfly/ Family	Size	Description/ distinctive features	Distribution & Adult Food (BA = Bay Area)	Time of Year	Caterpillar & Food
Monarch (<i>Danaus plexippus</i>) Danaidae	3.5-4.6" Large	Bright orange with black edging & veins	Widely distributed; largely tropical so migrates; Open areas, fields, meadows, marshes, weedy areas, roadsides; Eats flower nectar	Feb-Nov (D); All yr (BA) El Sob-more common in fall	Dull green with bands of yellow & black, several broods; Milkweeds (Asclepias)
Gulf Fritillary (<i>Agraulis vanillae incarnata</i>) Nymphalidae	2.5-3.1"	Bright orange, black edging on lower wings only, large silver spots under wings; Flies fast	From tropical group; Gone from El Sob after the 1990s freeze but back; Cultivated gardens in BA; Eats nectar	Aug-Nov (D); Spring, summer, fall (BA)	Slender, black with reddish stripes and widely spaced spines, several broods; Passion vines
Callippe Silverspot or Callippe Fritillary (<i>Speyeria callippe</i>) Nymphalidae	2-2.3"	Soft brownish gold rather than orange, outer black edge wings has large whitish dots, bright silver underspots	British Columbia to Dakotas, to Colorado; Most common BA fritillary, likes hilltops, chaparral; Adult food unknown	May to August (USGS)	Wild pansy or Johnny-jump-up (Viola pedunculata)
Common Checkerspot or Variable Checkerspot (<i>Euphydryas chalcedona</i>) Nymphalidae	1.3-2.2"	Mostly black with yellowish checker spots, red spots on trim upper wings Smaller & narrower than Callippe; A variable butterfly	Alaska to Dakotas to Baja; Abundant in BA in hills & chaparral, prairie, open forests; Tame; Eats flower nectar	March-July (D)	Black & spiny; living in colonies; one brood a year, over-winters; Scrophularia, Mimulus, snowberry, plantain, honeysuckle
Mylitta Crescent (<i>Phyioides mylitta</i>) Nymphalidae	1.1-1.4" Small	Orange with fine black lines, pale yellow crescent along edge of hind wing	Rockies to Pacific Coast through California; Almost everywhere in BA, fields, mountains, meadows, parks, weedy areas; Eats nectar	Feb-Dec (D); Spring, summer, fall (BA); Early spring-fall (T)	Black with yellow hairs on some segments, several broods; Thistles (Cirsium) and Milk Thistles (Silybum)
Painted Lady or Thistle Butterfly or Cosmopolitan (<i>Vanessa cardui</i> , <i>Cynthia cardui</i>) Nymphalidae	2-2.75"	Orange with black tips & edging around upper wings; distinguish from other "ladies" by white bars near wing tip ,four black spots across lower wing	From all over world except Australia; Migrates, also hibernates in mild winter areas; In open and disturbed areas where thistles grow; Prefers nectar from 3-6 ft high composites, especially thistles	Feb-Dec (migrates north in Spring, south in fall) D ; Year round (BA)	Lavender to pale brown, two yellow lateral lines with dark lines below on each side, spiny, makes leaf shelter; several broods; Thistles, nettles, mallow, fiddleneck, lupines, everlastings
West Coast Lady (<i>Vanessa annabella</i>) Nymphalidae	1.75-2"	Orange with black tips and edging, orange bar on front edge of upper front wing, four blue spots across lower wings; looks like smaller, more rusty Painted Lady	Only <i>Vanessa</i> restricted to West but found south to Guatemala; In BA in disturbed areas, foothills, chaparral, gardens, fields; Eats flower nectar	All year (D & BA)	Tan through brown to black with yellow lines, spiny, makes shelter from a leaf; caterpillars may be found all year including winter; Mallows

American Painted Lady or Virginia Lady (<i>Vanessa virginiensis</i>) Nymphalidae	1.75-2.1"	Orange with black edgings on front wings, white bar on front edge, two large eye spots underneath hind wing	Widely distributed in temperate Americas; Eats flower nectar	Mar-Nov (D); Year round (BA)	Yellow green stripes and red & white spots on black bands; spiny, makes leaf shelter; several broods; Everlasting, other composites, burdock
Buckeye (<i>Precis coenia</i> or <i>Junonia coenia</i>) Nymphalidae	2-2.5"	Brown, rounded wings, bright and large eyespots, orange bars on front wings	Southern U.S., along both coasts into Mexico & Cuba; Common in most of B A; old neglected fields, open areas with low vegetation and bare ground; Eats nectar	Feb-Dec (D); Year round (BA); Spring-fall (T)	Black, often with two yellowish stripes, very spiny; Plantain (Plantago), Owls Clover, monkey flower, toadflax, snapdragons, stonecrops
Common Hairstreak? or Gray Hairstreak (<i>Strymon melinus pudicus</i>) Lycaenidae	1-1.2" Small	Gray above, red spots at base of tail	Throughout continental US south to Venezuela; General distribution in BA in open, disturbed, weedy areas; Scarce early in season, more common later; Eats nectar	Feb-Oct (D); March-Oct (T)	Caterpillars feed on flowers & fruit, older ones on leaves; Mallows, lupine, hops, buckwheats
Canyon Oak Hairstreak? or Golden Hairstreak <i>Habrodais grunus lorquini</i> Lycaenidae	about 1.0" Small	Brown above, yellow brown underneath	In BA oak covered ridges & canyons; Doesn't seek flower nectar but looks for moisture sources & possibly aphid honeydew	Late June-Aug (T)	Slug like, greenish; Oaks (Quercus), especially Canyon Oak and Tanbark Oak
Bramble Hairstreak or Coastal Green Hairstreak (<i>Callophrys dumetorum</i>) Lycaenidae	1-1.2" Small	Male Gray; female brown-yellowish; both greenish below, gray lower forewing	In BA, general distribution & common in wastelands, rocky hills, and chaparral; Eats nectar	March-Apr (D); Early spring (T)	Buckwheat (Eriogonum), Lotus
Purplish Copper? (<i>Lycaena helloides</i>) Lycaenidae	1-1.25" Small	Male copper brown with purplish tint; female spotted; both with orange brown under wings and black spots	Great Lakes to British Columbia to Baja; Found almost everywhere in BA, most common copper; disturbed areas, open fields, wet meadows, roadsides; Flower nectar	June-Oct (D); Spring, summer, fall (BA), March-Oct (T)	Sluglike, green covered with short white hairs; Dock (Rumex), knotweed (Polygonum)
Varied Blue? or Blue Copper (<i>Lycaena heteronea</i>) Lycaenidae (Possibly Common Checkered Skipper instead.)	1.25" Small	Male bright blue above with narrow black rim; female duller and spotted; both have light under wings with small black spots; (Looks like this one but more back veining on upper area, seen frequently in the fall.)	British Columbia to N. New Mexico; in BA, mostly north of San Francisco Bay; In brushy areas, open forests, meadows; Scarce; Nectar from flowers	June-Oct (D); June-July (T)	Dock, buckwheats (Eriogonum)
Acmon Blue (<i>Plebeius acmon</i>) Lycaenidae	.75-1" Small	Male lavender-blue, hind wing has orange-pink edge; female very dark brown with orange edge of hind wing; both with large orange spots under hind wing	California west of Sierra Nevada to Baja; Most common blue in BA, found almost everywhere; fields, hills, weedy areas; Eats flower nectar	All year (D); Feb-Oct (T)	Various legumes (lotus, lupines, astragalus), buckwheat (Eriogonums)

Echo Blue or Spring Azure (<i>Celastrina ladon echo</i>) Lycaenidae	1-1.1" Small	Male azure blue above; female duller with dusky gray on forewings; both whitish below with tiny dark specks	Alaska south to mountains of Columbia; General BA distribution, found almost everywhere but more common in wooded areas and canyons; Eats flower nectar	Feb-July (D); Spring, summer, fall (BA); March-July (T)	Slug-like small, greenish whitish or rose colored with a small head; ants tend for honeydew; Two-three broods; Buds and flowers of trees & shrubs inc dogwood, buckeye (Asculus) California Lilac, and oak (Quercus), blueberry
Lindsey's Skipper? (<i>Hesperia lindseyi</i>) Hesperiidae	About 1.1" Small	Bright orange-brown upper wings; underside of hind wings has irregular row of yellow spots and veins	Pacific slope, Oregon to central California; in BA more common north of Bay in grassy foothills, chaparral, oak woodlands; Eats flower nectar	(May-July (D); Late May-June (T)	USGS says eggs laid in fall on tree lichens and lupines, caterpillars emerge in spring & feed on grass and bunchgrass
Woodland Skipper? (<i>Ochlodes sylvanoides</i>) Hesperiidae	.9-1.1" Small	Bright red-brown upper wings, underwings red-brown to dark, may have a pale band on hind wing	British Columbia to S. California, east to Montana; Almost everywhere in B A, probably most common skipper; roadsides, openings in forests, chaparral, gardens, riparian areas; Eats nectar	July-Oct (D); Summer to fall (BA)	Grasses, both native and cultivated
Common Checkered Skipper (<i>Pygus communis</i>) Hesperiidae ; (Probably this rather than Varied Copper listed earlier)	.75-1.25" Small	White checkered pattern on bluish-gray wings, male light gray; female darker	Most of temperate U.S. into Mexico; Found almost anywhere in BA; roadsides, old fields, waste lots, gardens, trails in woods; Eats flower nectar	Mar-Nov (D); Spring, summer, fall (BA);	Fully grown caterpillars hibernate (USGS); Mallows
Common White (<i>Pieris protodice</i>) some say Checkered White (<i>Pontia protodice</i>) Pieridae	1.5-2.2"	Male is glossy white with dark markings mostly on front pointed wings; female is dull white with brown checkered markings	Native to S. U.S & N. Mexico, migrates into Canada; Very common; Eats nectar	Ap-Nov (D)	Slender, light green to deep bluish green, four yellowish stripes & many black dots, many broods per year; Many species of Mustard family
Cabbage Butterfly or Imported Cabbage Worm (<i>Pieris rapae</i>) Pieridae	1.25-1.9"	Dull white with grey-black tips of forewings and one-two spots on upper wing	From Europe, All over US, widely distributed; Nectar for food	Feb-June (D); Spring, summer, fall (BA)	Bright green with tiny black specks, dark line down back, yellow dots on side; many broods, including in winter; Mustard family, cabbage, cauliflower, related vegetables and nasturtiums
Hairy Pipevine Swallowtail (<i>Battus philenor hirsuta</i>) Papilionidae	2.75-3.5 Large	Large; black on upper wings, deep iridescent blue on lower, orange spots underneath; flies very fast	Pipevine Swallowtails from Central and S U.S. where Aristolochia grows; Alameda, Contra Costa & N. Bay; moist areas; Nectar for food	Ap-Oct (D); Spring-summer (BA); Around much of day & also in winter (El Sob)	Black with bright red spots, long filaments on body, two-three broods a year; Pipevine (Aristolochia);
Anise Swallowtail or Western Parsley Swallowtail (<i>Papilo zelicaon</i>)	2.5-3" Large	Smaller and deeper yellow, much more black (including all around wings) than other yellow	British Columbia to Mexico; Widely distributed in BA, vacant lots, roadsides, hills,	Mar-Oct (D); Spring-summer (BA); Mar-Oct (T)	Black with orange spots when young, green with black bands when mature; young larvae eat

Papilionidae		swallowtails	fields; Adult food not reported		leaves, adults eat flowers; Native parsley-like plants (Umbelliferae), now introduced anise; fennel, Lomatium, Tauschia
Western Tiger Swallowtail (<i>Papilo rutulus</i>) Papilionidae	2.75-3.9" Large	Large; yellow with wide black wing edges, four black vertical stripes on upper wing; (Two-tailed Swallowtail very similar but for double tail and found more in Inner Coast Ranges)	Western North America, widely distributed in most of California; In BA, streamsides, wooded areas, canyons, roadsides; Food is flower nectar	Mar-Sept (D); Spring-summer (BA); March to fall (T)	Bright green with big “false” eyes on fourth segment and a black & yellow bar just back of these; Willow, cottonwood, sycamore, elm, ash, wild cherry (Prunus), apples
Pale Swallowtail (<i>Papilio eurymedon</i>) Papilionidae	3.0-3.5" Large	Like Western Tiger Swallowtail but white instead of yellow	British Columbia to Montana, south to Baja; in BA, widely distributed on hills & in canyons, chaparral, plays around summit of hills, attracted to water	Mar-Aug (D); Year round (BA)	Soft green with “eyes” reduced to a few dark markings, at least two broods; Coffee Berry (Rhamnus), California Lilac

Trying to attract these butterflies with larval plants:

Red Admiral (<i>Vanessa atalanta</i>) Nymphalidae	1.75-2.3"	Black with reddish bands crossing upper wings, reddish edging on lower wings, white spots on wing tips; erratic rapid flyer	In N. America, Europe & Asia; Not common in BA, found in riparian areas, moist yards, woods; Eat sap flows on trees, fermenting fruit, bird droppings; visit flowers only when these not available	All yr (D & BA); Adults overwinter in BA and sometimes are active on warm winter days; cannot survive a lot of cold	Black & spiny, draws edges of leaves together & lives inside, three or more broods; Nettles, hops
California Silvespot or Crown Fritillary or Coronis Fritillary (<i>Speyeria coronis</i>) Nymphalidae	2-3.3"	Pale orange with black checkers and edges of wings, silver underneath	Great Basin to South Dakota to Baja; in BA in canyons and woodland clearings; Eats flower nectar	June (D); Mid June-Sept (USGS)	Wild violets
Satyr Anglewing or Satyr Comma (<i>Polygonia satyrus</i>) Nymphalidae?	1.75-2.5"	Gold-orange with black splotches, wings have jagged edges, looks like a leaf with wings closed,	Yukon south to Baja, Great Lakes to Nova Scotia; Most common BA Anglewing; in valley bottoms, riparian areas; live a long time as adults, come out in winter and fly around; Eats tree sap, rotting fruit, flower nectar	All yr (D & BA)	Nettles

Sources:

Butterflies of the San Francisco Bay Region, J.W. Tilden, UC Press 1965

Butterfly List Mt Diablo flyer compiled by Rich Kelson, Entomologist, 1994 (lists larval foods).

Local Butterflies of the San Francisco Bay Area, Local Guides to Natural Science, Woodside, 1999

Peterson First Guide to Caterpillars by Wright Houghton Mifflin 1993

Butterflies and Moths, A Golden Guide, Golden Press, 1962

<http://www.npwrc.usgs.gov/resource/distr/lepid/bflyusa/ca/toc.htm> (has extensive details on food for butterflies;)

Other good local sources for larval and nectar plants are:

Flora for Fauna Habitat Plants for Birds, Butterflies and Beneficial Insects, by Wayside Gardens, 1999

<http://www.waywardgardens.com/>

The Habitat Garden Book Wildlife Landscaping for the San Francisco Bay Region, Nancy Bauer, Coyote Ridge Press, 2001

California Flora List on East Bay Chapter of California Native Plant society (has some hummingbird, bees, beneficial insect and larval plant food information)

<http://www.ebcnps.org/links/CaliforniaFlora.htm>

<http://www.mostlynatives.com/butterflies.htm>