

## Butterfly weed

# *Asclepias tuberosa* L.

**Group:** Dicot

**Family:** Asclepiadaceae (milkweed)

**Growth Habit:** Forb/herb

**Duration:** Perennial

**U.S. Nativity:** Native in much of U.S., excluding the northwest

**Natural Enemies Attracted:** Small numbers of [Empididae](#), [Thomisidae](#), [Chalcidoidea](#) and [Orius insidiosus](#).

**Pests Attracted:** Small numbers of lygus bug, aphids, leafhoppers, froghoppers and root-maggot flies.

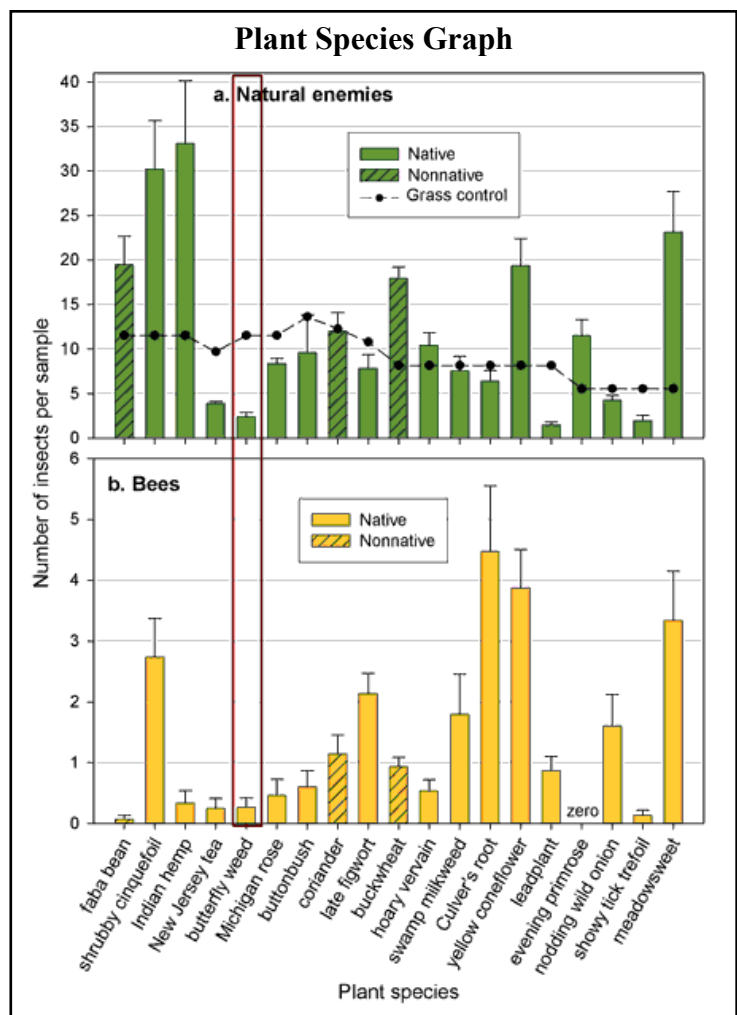
**Bees attracted:** Low numbers (less than 1 bee per meter square in a 30 second sample) of bees including sweat bees and bumble bees.



**Species Notes:** Bright orange flower clusters about 2 inches wide bloom at the top of the plant. Plants grew 2-3 feet tall and bloomed in early July. This species was one of the least attractive to natural enemies in the mid season.

### About the Plant Species Graph:

Average number of beneficial insects collected at each plant species the week before, during, and after peak bloom, for plant species blooming from mid-August through early October (+ standard error). Butterfly weed (*Asclepias tuberosa*) boxed in red. Bars for natural enemies are in green, bars for bees are in yellow. Bars for native plants are solid and nonnative plants are striped. The black line on the top graph shows the number of natural enemies in grass with no flowering plants (grass control). Plants are listed in order of peak bloom.



**Habitat:** Full sun to partial shade and very dry to average soil moisture. Found in fields and along sandy roadsides. Naturally occurring in woodland openings and dry barrens. Generally associated with dry prairie, pine and oak barrens.

**Cultivation and Management:** Can be grown from seed (flowers in third year) or plug material (flowers in second year). This species did not establish well from plugs in our full-sun, average moisture site.

**Availability:** Species is available as seed or plug material from various native plant nurseries. See the Michigan Native Plant Producers Association

**For more information:** View the online USDA-NRCS PLANTS database

