Butterfly Weed

Asclepias tuberosa spp. interior



Butterfly Weed flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 28 inches

Spread: 28 inches

Sunlight:

Hardiness Zone: 3

Description:

Masses of tiny blossoms in brilliant shades of orange, attracts butterflies to the garden; blooms last several weeks, and plants are drought tolerant and resistant to pests; will flower the first year with an early sowing

Ornamental Features

Butterfly Weed has fragrant orange flat-top flowers with yellow eyes at the ends of the stems from early to late summer. The flowers are excellent for cutting. Its narrow leaves remain green in color throughout the season.

Landscape Attributes

Butterfly Weed is an herbaceous perennial with an upright spreading habit of growth. Its medium texture blends into the garden, but can always be balanced by a couple of finer or coarser plants for an effective composition.

This is a relatively low maintenance plant, and is best cleaned up in early spring before it resumes active growth for the season. It is a good choice for attracting butterflies to your yard, but is not particularly attractive to deer who tend to leave it alone in favor of tastier treats. It has no significant negative characteristics.

Butterfly Weed is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Mass Planting
- General Garden Use
- Naturalizing And Woodland Gardens

Planting & Growing

Butterfly Weed will grow to be about 24 inches tall at maturity, with a spread of 28 inches. It tends to be leggy, with a typical clearance of 1 foot from the ground, and should be underplanted with lower-growing perennials. It grows at a medium rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 10 years. As an herbaceous perennial, this plant will usually die back to the crown each winter, and will regrow from the base each spring. Be careful not to disturb the crown in late winter when it may not be readily seen!

This plant should only be grown in full sunlight. It is very adaptable to both dry and moist locations, and should do just fine under typical garden conditions. It is considered to be drought-tolerant, and thus makes an ideal choice for a low-water garden or xeriscape application. It is not particular as to soil pH, but grows best in sandy soils. It is quite intolerant of urban pollution, therefore inner city or urban streetside plantings are best avoided. This species is native to parts of North America.