

Asclepias tuberosa L.
Butterfly Weed

Butterfly weed is one of the few truly orange flowers that are available to gardeners. This tough little cousin of the more mundane common milkweed can frequently be seen growing in full sun in the poor soils of highway cuts and other disturbed places. However, for all its toughness it can be rather difficult to establish and frequently suffers transplant shock, possibly due to its long taproot. Once established though, it will reward the gardener with a long season of bloom and often a second bloom late in the season.

Butterfly weed is so adapted to dry, infertile soils that it will not perform well in very moist or wet situations.

One pest that can be of concern for this plant, especially right after transplant, are spider mites which not only thrive but are favored by the hot, dry situations in which butterfly weed is often found..



Butterfly weed is one of the last plants to poke its head above ground in the spring so keep the faith if it doesn't appear alongside your other perennials.