



Perennial Plant of the Year 2017

This year's Perennial Plant of the Year is not just one of our favorite native perennials, but one of our favorite perennial flowers, period. The Perennial Plant Association has named *Asclepias tuberosa* as the featured plant this year for many good reasons.

Better known as Butterfly Weed, *Asclepias* is an absolute butterfly magnet and serves as larval food

for the Monarch butterfly. Bees and other insects are also attracted to the flowers, as are hummingbirds.

The eye-popping orange flowers are at home in prairie plantings as well as in formal gardens. Mass plantings are sensational, and the plant makes a great companion to many summer blooming perennials such as *Echinacea*, *Liatris*, *Salvia*, *Rudbeckia*, *Phlox* and daylilies. Butterfly weed grows around 2-3' tall with a spread of 2', and is hardy to Zone 4.

Asclepias is best sited in moderate to dry soils in full sun. It is drought tolerant, generally free of insect and disease problems, and is not attractive to deer. Mature plants are difficult to transplant and divide, so give thought to where you want them to be. Try not to disturb the roots very much when you set young plants into the garden and avoid over-watering them as they become established.

