



Georgia Butterfly Gardening Workshop

April 19, 2025

Jill Gorman – BFG member

Nearly 10 years ago, I wanted to add some butterfly plants to my small, suburban yard just north of Atlanta, GA. I started off with very little knowledge and never would have dreamed that I would now host a yearly workshop and give away thousands of native pollinator plants. When I first started out, I thought that you helped pollinators simply by adding pretty flowers. I knew nothing about host plants and supporting their whole lifecycle until I noticed a single Gulf fritillary caterpillar on my passion flower (*Passiflora*). At first, I wasn't happy that something was eating my beautiful vine, but a quick internet search told me that it would soon become a beautiful butterfly. This was the first time that I had heard about host plants and learned that they are the key to a successful butterfly garden. I learned as much as I could and planned a new garden around native plants. I soon realized that it would be difficult and expensive to purchase native plants in my area, so I planned to grow about 20 species from seed.



I started the seeds the next spring and I was so successful that I had a few hundred extra plants that wouldn't fit into my garden! I decided to exchange the plants for a \$1 donation each for our local North American Butterfly Association chapter. My first small event was

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attended by dozens of people, and I realized that there is a huge demand for affordable native plants and knowledge about how to best help pollinators.

A few years ago, we moved to three acres of land north of Gainesville, GA. Since then, I have either found or added more than 300 species of native plants. Each year, I find more and more wildlife visitors, and I have documented more than 300 invertebrate species in my gardens! You can find most of my recent observations documented on iNaturalist under my username jill1004. I have learned that if you start a garden for butterflies, it benefits the entire ecosystem!

Every spring since 2017, I have hosted Jill's Butterfly Garden Workshop at my home. Starting in January, I grow about 6,000 native plants of approximately 80-100 species from seeds collected in my gardens. I have the plants available for a \$1 donation each, which I donate to [Monarchs Across Georgia](#) and our elementary school's garden club. I start off the workshop with a lecture on gardening for butterflies and other pollinators and give a tour of my habitat. I have learned that people are more likely to attend a lecture on gardening for butterflies instead of bees or wasps, but the right habitat will support all pollinators. An expert from Monarchs Across Georgia, Susan Meyers, also attends to give a presentation on monarch migration and how we can all help them. Usually, I have leftover plants at the end of the day that are available for free to any community organization, school, or church. Many people and organizations want to help pollinators, but don't have the financial resources available. My main goal for growing so many plants is to get the plants to anyone willing to plant them to help pollinators and the environment!

In the last eight years, I have grown and given away more than 20,000 native plants, and this year I will add another 6,000 to that list. This year, my workshop will be held on April 19, 2025 at my home in Gainesville, GA. I also enjoy photography and sharing my images for educational purposes. Many of my images are available for free download for not-for-profit use at www.jillgormanphotography.com/Garden-Life.

[Click here](#) for more information about the event.

For workshop details, schedule, and plant list, see [this brochure](#).

To follow Jill's gardening adventures, visit [Jill's Butterfly Garden on Facebook](#).

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