

Beautiful Butterflies

Spring is in full swing and the butterflies are just one of many flying insects starting to appear. Some butterflies 'overwinter' as caterpillars and some as adults, and when the weather warms up they will emerge. The [Woodland Trust](#) provide great tick sheets to help you identify some [butterflies](#) and [caterpillars](#) in your local area.

Play Cryptic Caterpillars



Caterpillars try to hide from birds that might like to eat them by having the same colours and patterns as the things around them. This is called camouflage.

You will need: 10 wool caterpillars (lengths of wool or string about 5cm long in different colours. Some greens and browns and some bright colours).

Find a patch of grass. Cover your eyes. Get a grown up or sibling to hide the wool caterpillars in the grass or bushes - no peeking! Pretend to be a bird and see how long it takes you to find all 10 wool caterpillars. Which colour ones were easier to spot?

Go Butterfly Spotting

Butterflies have very delicate wings. They are covered in thousands of tiny scales and their wing muscles won't work in the cold. This is why you will be much more likely to spot butterflies when it is warm and sunny and not too windy.

You can spot butterflies anywhere, as different types like woodlands, meadows or gardens; but finding a warm, sunny sheltered spot will help.

Use the identification sheet above. You can also download the 'iRecord Butterflies' App from [Butterfly Conservation](#) to help identify and submit your sightings.

Feed the Butterflies

Butterflies drink nectar from flowers using their long tongue which they keep rolled up under their head.

The best way to feed butterflies is to grow native flowers. [Butterfly Conservation](#) have some good advice and ideas.

For some fast food, you can make an easy butterfly feeder for your garden or windowsill. Follow this simple [activity sheet](#) from the Surrey Wildlife Trust. Or for a rainy day activity, try their [butterfly painting activity](#) to make your own beautiful butterfly.

Tasting Feet

Butterflies taste with their feet! Butterflies only lay their eggs on the plants that their caterpillars like to eat. So to help them decide where to lay their eggs, butterflies will taste the leaf with the taste sensors in their feet to make sure it is the right type of plant.

You will need: a few cloth/opaque bags, household objects like pegs/pencils/buttons/marbles etc, some elastic bands.

How sensitive are your feet? Get an adult to fill several bags with different objects such as marbles or pegs. Put an elastic band around the top of each bag to keep the contents a secret. Slide your foot into the bag and wiggle your toes - can you guess what's in there?

