



BIG CITY Butterflies

London supports a fantastic variety of wildlife which includes lots of amazing butterflies and moths. These bright and beautiful insects can be spotted all around the city. Here are some of our favourites for you to look out for.



HOLLY BLUE

This dainty blue butterfly is one to spot in parks and gardens. Next time you walk past a holly bush, see if you can spot a flash of blue flying up high! As the name suggests, the caterpillars like to eat holly, but they will also eat ivy.



PEACOCK

The beautiful Peacock is one of our most recognisable butterflies. It gets its name from the bright eyespots on its red wings, which look like a peacock's tail feathers. It will flash these vivid eyespots to scare off predators. Its caterpillar loves to munch on nettles.

DID YOU KNOW

Peacock butterflies can also use their wings to 'hiss' at predators!



BRIMSTONE

This delicate bright yellow butterfly has a clever way of hiding. When its wings are folded together, it closely resembles a leaf to avoid being spotted by hungry predators!

DID YOU KNOW

Comma caterpillars are masters of disguise – they look just like bird poo!



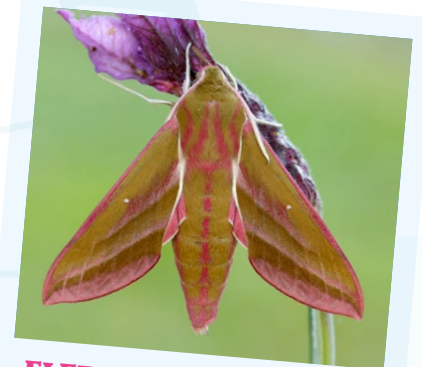
COMMA

This orange butterfly has a very special shape as the wings have wavy edges. It gets its name from the white 'comma' mark on the underside of its wings. Like Peacock butterflies, comma caterpillars love nettles.



JERSEY TIGER MOTH

This special moth has striped chocolate-brown and cream forewings and bright orange spotted hindwings and can be seen flying during the day and at night from July to September.



ELEPHANT HAWK-MOTH

The Elephant Hawk-moth is one of our most beautiful and recognisable moths. Its striking hot pink and olive-green colouring makes it unmistakable! It is the caterpillar stage that gives this special moth its name - it looks just like an elephant's trunk.

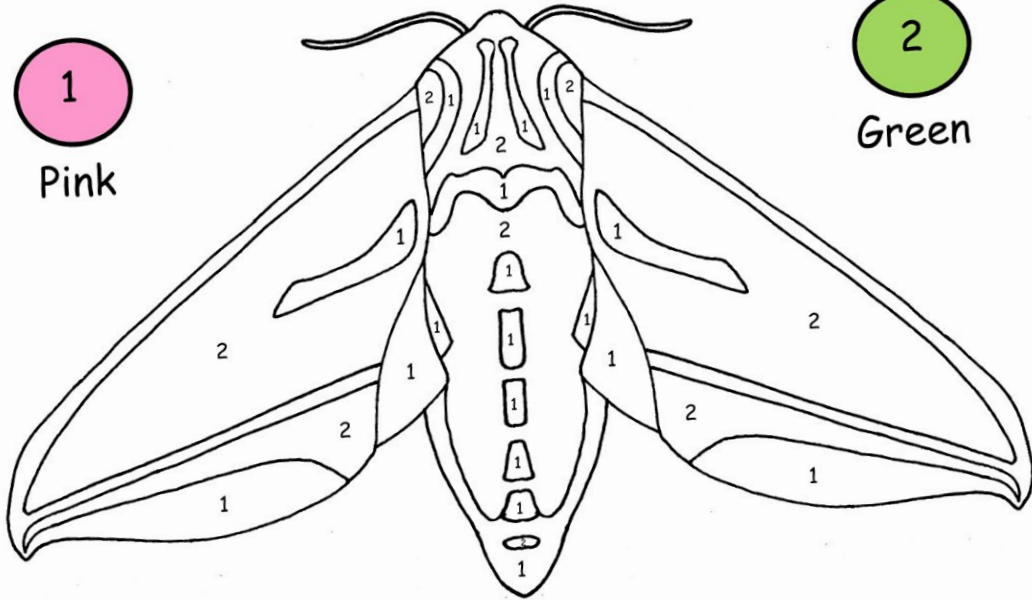
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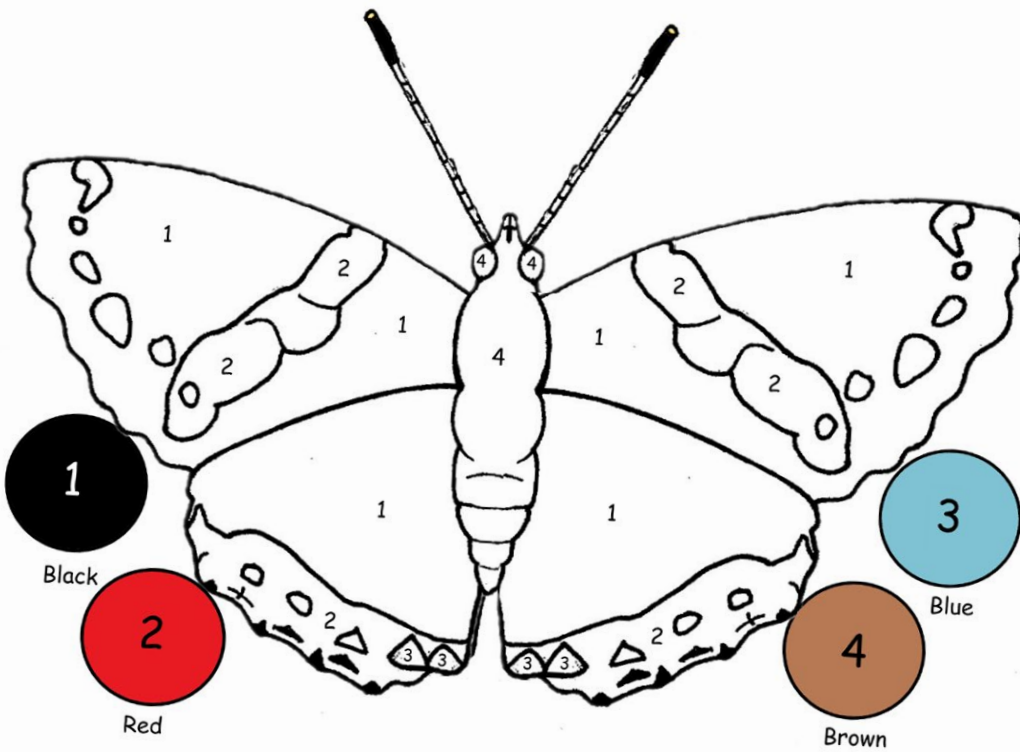
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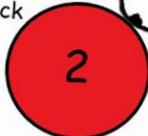
Green



ELEPHANT HAWK-MOTH



Black



Red



Blue



Brown

MATCH THE BUTTERFLY TO ITS CATERPILLAR FOOD PLANT.



DID YOU KNOW
The White Admiral caterpillar piles up its own poo to create a defensive wall to stop it being eaten by predators.

DID YOU KNOW
In the UK, 1 in 4 front gardens are paved over and 1 in 3 has no plants.



AT HOME IN THE CITY



CEMETERIES AND CHURCHYARDS

Cemeteries and churchyards can be bursting with wildlife! They often have areas that are left wild or are specially managed for wildlife. The mix of trees, shrubs, grasses and wildflowers make them excellent places for caterpillars to have a munch and for butterflies and moths to shelter and drink nectar.



RAILWAY LINES

These habitats offer warm, sunny and sheltered conditions, which butterflies and moths love! Often it's the plants we think of as weeds that we see alongside the tracks, like thistles and nettles that are great for butterflies, moths and their caterpillars.



VERGES

The green space right next to roads and footpaths can be a haven for our butterflies and moths. Verges are often home to caterpillar food plants such as grasses and wildflowers, especially if they are left to grow long. They are often linked to hedgerows which are also very important.

DID YOU KNOW

47 of the UK's 59 butterflies have been recorded in the Greater London area.



GARDENS, PARKS, ALLOTMENTS, SCHOOL GROUNDS

London has over 3,000 parks and open spaces! These green spaces are great for butterflies and moths as they offer shelter, lots of delicious nectar sources and food for hungry caterpillars like nettles, holly, trees and grasses.

DID YOU KNOW

Around 47% of London is green space!



HEDGEROWS

Hedgerows are important places for lots of wildlife including birds, mammals and of course insects! The trees and shrubs in hedgerows provide food and shelter for caterpillars. Grass and wildflowers at the bottom of hedges can also offer precious nectar and shelter for butterflies and moths, as well as somewhere for them to lay their eggs.

London has so many green spaces where you can discover wildlife. Why don't you head down to your local park and see what you can spot? Help keep your local wildlife safe by taking litter home with you or making sure it goes in the bin. Always treat your park with care!

HELPING BUTTERFLIES AND MOTHS

Sadly, three-quarters of our butterflies are in decline, and our moths are faring badly too. There is a lot you can do to help London's butterflies and moths, from taking simple steps to make your home butterfly and moth friendly to helping us spot and record butterflies that live near you.

DID YOU KNOW
Most adult moths feed on nectar but some have no mouth parts so they can only live for a few days!

TOP TIPS FOR A CITY SANCTUARY

Whether you have a garden, a balcony, a window box or a shared green space, you can create your very own mini butterfly and moth oasis in the heart of the city.



Grow plants in containers and be creative. You don't need to use expensive pots, you could use recycled containers like plastic bottles, tins or crates. Make sure you use peat-free compost.



Caterpillars can be very fussy eaters. Some great food plants include nasturtiums, wild grasses, fuchsias, mint and honeysuckle.



Grow some nectar-rich butterfly and moth fuel such as lavender, catmint, verbena, primrose, thyme and marjoram. Choosing a variety will attract different butterflies and moths. Sunny, sheltered spots are best.



Let the grass grow and don't be too tidy – turn part of your garden into a mini wilderness and let the grass grow tall during the summer. In the wintertime, dead stems and leaf litter provide homes for caterpillars and other insects.



Plant flowers that bloom at different times, then there will always be nectar available during the butterfly season (spring to autumn). Spring flowers help butterflies that have come out of hibernation and autumn flowers help butterflies get ready for winter.



Spread the word! By encouraging your neighbours to do the same you can create a corridor of nectar plants, which will help butterflies and moths travel more easily between habitats.

RECORDING BUTTERFLIES



You can tell us which butterflies you have spotted in London through the free iRecord Butterflies app (which can be downloaded from iTunes or the Google Store). Wherever you spot them, sending us your butterfly sightings helps us learn more about how butterflies are doing in the capital and how we can help them. The app also includes an identification guide to help you work out which butterfly you have seen. Every sighting counts!

Find out more:

If you have enjoyed learning about London's butterflies and moths and want to discover more, take a look at our Big City Butterflies webpage on the Butterfly Conservation website: www.butterfly-conservation.org/BCB or for more family friendly activities and resources go to www.butterfly-conservation.org/family-fun.



We'd love you to take part in the Big Butterfly Count which runs every year at the end of July. Head over to the website for all the details:

www.bigbutterflycount.org



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