

What to look for: Butterflies

Woodland is an important habitat for several butterfly species. This sheet illustrates some of the species that you are most likely to see, and highlights aspects of their behaviour that you can easily study in a simple project.



This **green-veined white** butterfly is drinking nectar from the purple flower of a hawkweed plant. By recording the colours of the flowers visited by different butterflies, you can investigate species-preferences for different flower colours.

This **large white butterfly** is common in gardens, where its caterpillars can cause a lot of damage to cabbages and other green-leaf vegetables. Can you find any caterpillars living on cabbages in your garden? If so, why not keep them indoors on fresh cabbage leaves, and discover what kind of butterfly they will eventually turn into!



The **brimstone** butterfly is one of the first butterflies to be seen in spring. Why not keep a "**butterfly diary**", to find out which species are active at different times of year?



The **comma** is active late into the autumn, when it can be attracted to drink the juice of fallen fruit.



The **speckled wood** is a very **territorial** butterfly, where each male defends a separate patch of sunlight on the woodland floor, and fights other males who try to enter it. You can follow different speckled wood butterflies for 10 minutes each, and sketch out a map of each territory.



Some butterflies such as this **peacock** have **eye spots** on their wings, to make their predators think they are a much bigger (scarier) animal!