

Large Butterflies

These butterflies soar on powerful wings which span 2 1/2 to 4 inches (6-10 cm).

Monarch

Danaus plexippus

This butterfly is famous for its long migrations. In fall, look for adults flying to coastal roosting spots, such as Ardenwood Historic Farm and Point Pinole Regional Shoreline, where they may congregate until spring. The caterpillars feed on milkweed, which makes them poisonous to birds.

Host plants: milkweed.



Photo: Eric Nicholas

Pale Swallowtail

Papilio eurymedon

Males of many species of swallowtail patrol around hilltops waiting for females. These butterflies prefer sipping nectar from buckeye flowers.

Host plants: Various members of the buckthorn and rose families, such as California lilacs and ocean spray.



Pipevine Swallowtail

Battus philenor

The larvae of this brilliant black and blue butterfly feed on Dutchman's pipe. This host plant contains chemicals that make the adult poisonous to birds. A bright patch of shiny blue-green scales warns them not to eat this shimmering beauty.

Host plants: Dutchman's pipe.



Photo: Ryan Leib

East Bay Regional Park District

Healthy Parks Healthy People

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1-888-EBPARKS or 1-888-327-2757 (TRS 711)
ebparks.org

Visitor Centers

Ardenwood Historic Farm, Fremont
510-544-2797, awvisit@ebparks.org

Big Break Regional Shoreline, Oakley
Big Break Visitor Center at the Delta
510-544-3050, bigbreakvisit@ebparks.org

Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve, Antioch
510-544-2750, bdvisit@ebparks.org

Coyote Hills Regional Park, Fremont
510-544-3220, chvisit@ebparks.org

Crown Memorial State Beach, Alameda
Crab Cove Visitor Center and Aquarium
510-544-3187, ccove@ebparks.org

Del Valle Regional Park, Livermore
510-544-3146, svisit@ebparks.org
Open summer weekends

Garin/Dry Creek Pioneer Regional Parks, Hayward
510-544-3220 (Coyote Hills), chvisit@ebparks.org
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Sunol-Ohlone Regional Wilderness, Sunol
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Tilden Regional Park, Berkeley
Botanic Garden: 510-544-3169, bgarden@ebparks.org
Tilden Nature Area/Environmental Education Center
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On the cover: Gray hairstreak.
Photos courtesy Jerry Ting unless otherwise noted.



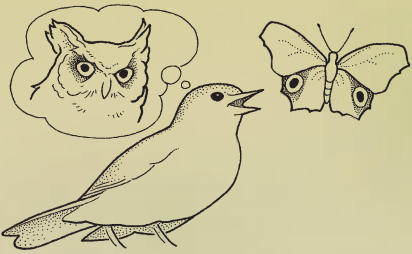
Common Butterflies in the East Bay Regional Park District



Like living flowers, brightly colored butterflies grace the skies of our Regional Parks. They are finely adapted creatures, intricately woven into nature's web of life.

A Coat of Many Colors

The one thing that sets butterflies and moths apart from all other insects is their beautiful wings. The "dust" which covers them is actually thousands of tiny scales. Thus, the Latin name for butterflies and moths is LEPIDOPTERA, which means "scaly wings."



Through time, these scales have become arranged into countless color patterns that serve to warn, defend, camouflage, and identify other butterflies of the same species. Alameda and Contra Costa counties are home to at least 93 different kinds of butterflies.

Not only beautiful to look at, butterflies are also important pollinators of many plants and are a food source for a wide variety of birds, mammals, reptiles, and other insects.

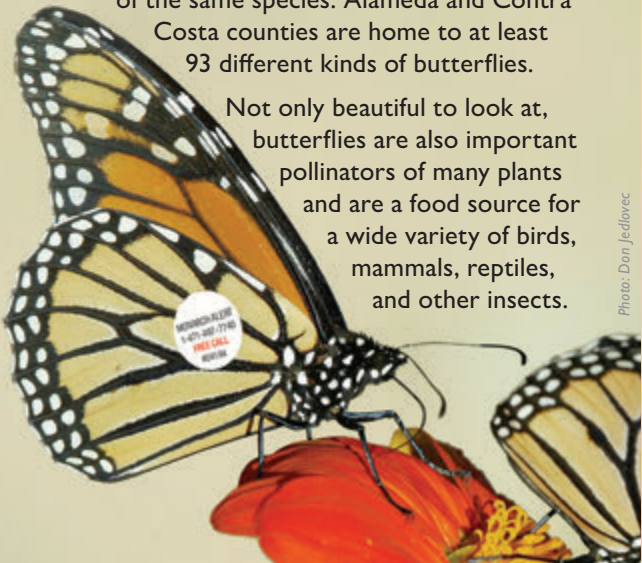
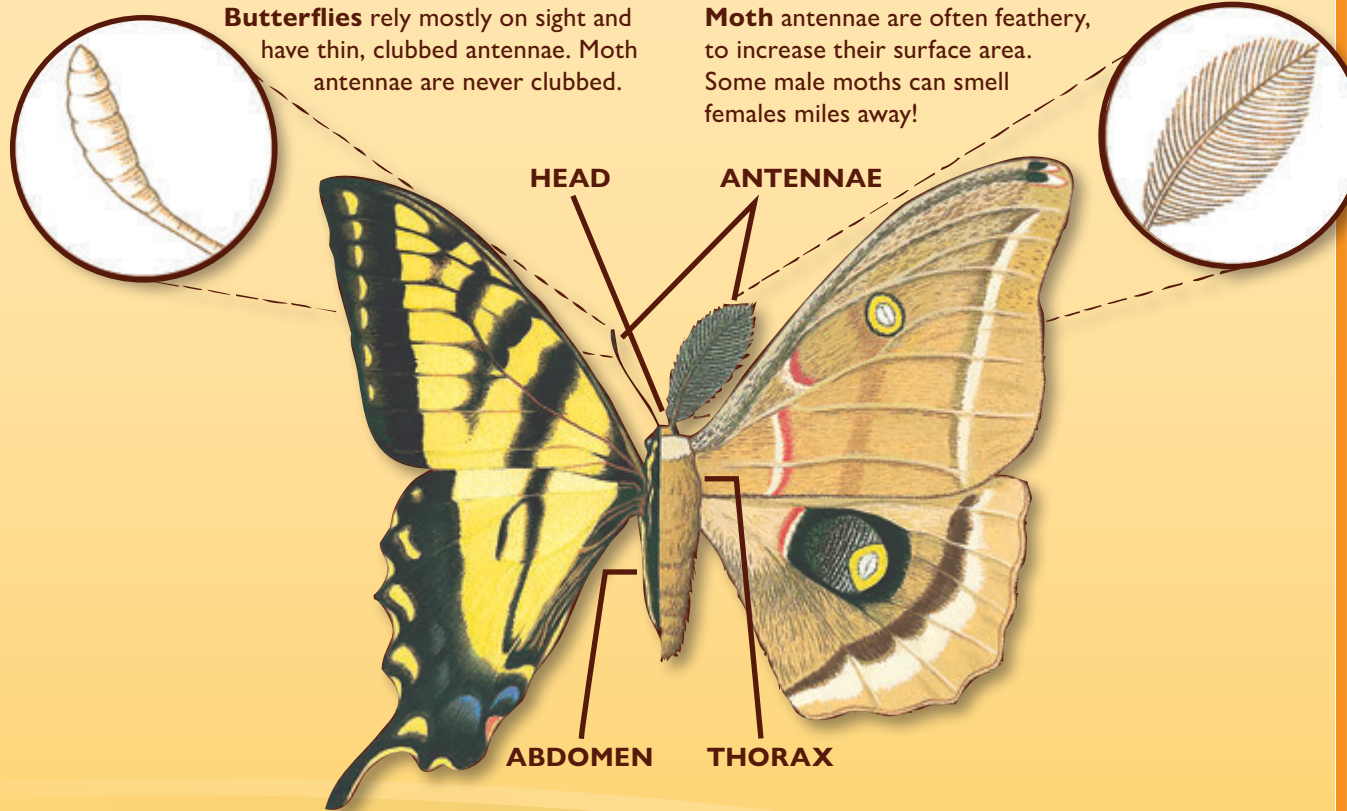


Photo: Don Jedlovac

Butterflies and Moths: As Different as Night and Day

By day, butterflies use their bright colors and large, compound eyes to find food and each other. When night comes, moths who have remained hidden during the day use their antennae to smell traces

of food and to find mates. Antennae, which many people call "feelers," are actually specialized organs for smelling and tasting. The best way to distinguish a butterfly from a moth is by comparing their antennae.



Butterflies rely mostly on sight and have thin, clubbed antennae. Moth antennae are never clubbed.

Moth antennae are often feathery, to increase their surface area. Some male moths can smell females miles away!

Protecting Butterflies

There has been a noticeable decline in recent years in butterfly populations, particularly at lower elevations. The reasons for this decline are puzzling and complex. Some Bay Area species have already become extinct. Others are threatened.

The East Bay Regional Parks provide a refuge for

butterflies and other wildlife species. The butterflies listed in this brochure represent a small part of this amazing diversity.

Remember: collecting is NOT PERMITTED in any of the Regional Parks, but we encourage you to come enjoy these fascinating creatures.

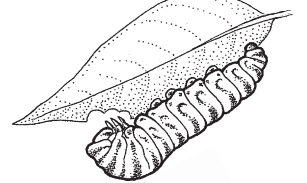
Butterflies as Quick-Change Artists

In its lifetime, a butterfly will go through four distinct stages, each designed for a specific purpose.

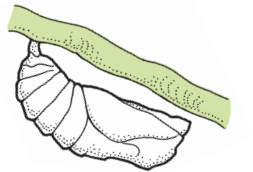
1. EGGS are laid on the leaves of a host plant which the caterpillar will eat. Before laying, the female butterfly "tastes" the plant with special pads on her feet.



2. CATERPILLARS (larvae) are eating machines. In several weeks, one of these voracious plant-eaters may grow from 3/8 of an inch to over 5 inches in length, 13 times its original size!



3. PUPA—In the pupa stage, the caterpillar becomes a chrysalis and then transforms into an elegant butterfly.



4. ADULT—When a butterfly emerges, it is equipped to do what it does best: mate. You may spot them sipping nectar from flowers or water from puddles.



Small Butterflies

Small-sized butterflies have a tiny wing-spans of 1/2 to 1 1/2 inches (1 cm-4 cm).

Small butterflies have a quick, skipping flight.



Acmon Blue

Plebejus acmon

When this butterfly opens its wings it reveals the brilliant blue which gives it its name. When closed, its wings are white with black and orange spots.

Host plants: shrubs and herbs of buckwheat and pea families.

Fiery Skipper

Hylephila phyleus

These bright, fat-bodied butterflies are often mistaken for moths. They get their name from their quick, skipping flight. At rest, they hold their bottom wings out flat and keep their top wings at a 45 degree angle.

Host plants: many kinds of grass including Bermuda grass.

Gray Hairstreak

Strymon melinus

The two hairlike tails on the hind wings of these delicate butterflies resemble antennae. This "false head" draws a predator's attention away from the vital parts of the body, giving the butterfly a better chance to escape.

Host plants: alfalfa, mallow, and lupine.

Western Pygmy-Blue

Brephidium exile

A common species throughout California except in northwest counties. Found near salt marsh habitats. Like the acmon blue, it moves its hind wings while sipping nectar to draw attention to its "eye spots."

Host plants: species of Atriplex.

Medium Butterflies

Medium-sized butterflies have wingspans 1 1/2 to 2 1/2 inches (4 cm-6 cm).



Mylitta Crescent

Phyciodes mylitta

These butterflies are commonly seen patrolling open fields and meadows in search of mates.

Host plants: many thistles including bull, cobweb, milk, and Italian thistles.



American Lady

Vanessa virginiensis

Less common than the West Coast lady, this butterfly is found in our coastal chaparral. This orange and black butterfly has a white rectangle on the edge of the upper wing.

Host plants: cudweeds, pearly everlasting, mugwort, and milk thistle.

Cabbage White

Pieris rapae

Accidentally introduced from Europe in 1866, this species has spread throughout the country and is now one of our most common butterflies.

Host plants: most members of the mustard family.

California Sister

Adelpha bredowii

The pattern on this butterfly's wings reminded early explorers of a nun's habit. It looks much like the slightly smaller Lorquin's admiral.

Host plants: canyon live oak, coast live oak, and chinquapin.

West Coast Lady

Vanessa annabella

This butterfly is common along trailsides and in open meadows throughout the West Coast. This orange and black butterfly has an orange rectangle on the edge of the upper front wing.

Host plants: cheeseweed, western hollyhocks, lupines, and mallow.



Orange Sulfur

Colias eurytheme

This yellow butterfly with orange hues is found all over California. Often the females are white or greenish. It has become a common butterfly because it can use alfalfa as a host plant.

Host plants: alfalfa, clover, and vetch.

