<http://www.sciencekids.co.nz/sciencefacts/animals/butterfly.html>

* Butterflies are insects.
* A butterfly’s lifecycle is made up of four parts, egg, larva (caterpillars), pupa (chrysalis) and adult.
* Butterflies attach their eggs to leaves with a special glue.
* Most caterpillars are plant eaters (herbivores).
* Fully grown caterpillars attach themselves to a suitable twig or leaf before shedding their outside layer of skin to reveal a hard skin underneath known as a chrysalis.
* An adult butterfly will eventually emerge from the chrysalis where it will wait a few hours for its wings to fill with blood and dry, before flying for the first time.
* Butterflies can live in the adult stage from anywhere between a week and a year, depending on the species.
* Butterflies have four wings.
* Butterflies often have brightly coloured wings with unique patterns made up of tiny scales.
* Most butterflies feed on nectar from flowers.
* Butterflies have taste receptors on their feet.
* Scientists estimate that there are between 15000 and 20000 different species of butterfly.
* Birdwing butterflies have large, angular wings and fly in a similar way to birds.
* Monarch butterflies are known for their long migration. Every year monarch butterflies will travel a great distance (sometimes over 4000 km), females will lay eggs and a new generation of monarchs will travel back, completing the cycle.

<http://www.ecowatch.com/10-super-cool-facts-about-butterflies-1891180962.html>

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Bottom of Form

Top of Form

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# 10 Super Cool Facts About Butterflies

By Judy Molland

From those small cabbage whites to the largest swallowtails, there are thousands of unique and beloved butterfly species on the planet. Many of us see them outside every day in the spring and summer, but how much do you know about these colorful insects?

The Cabbage White is the most common butterfly in the U.S. Photo credit: Thinkstock

Here are 10 fascinating facts to consider next time you cross a butterfly's path:

**1. There are more than 17,500 recorded butterfly species** around the world, [750 of which can be found](https://www.si.edu/Encyclopedia_SI/nmnh/buginfo/butterflyus.htm) in the U.S.

**2. Butterflies and moths** are part of the [class of insects in the order Lepidoptera](http://www.enchantedlearning.com/subjects/butterfly/allabout/). [Butterflies](http://ecowatch.com/?s=butterflies) are flying insects with large scaly wings. Like all insects, they have six jointed legs and three body parts: the head, the thorax and the abdomen. The wings are attached to the thorax and they also have a pair of antennae, compound eyes and an exoskeleton.

**3. The Cabbage White, seen above**, **is the** [**most common butterfly**](http://www.fcps.edu/islandcreekes/ecology/cabbage_white.htm) in the U.S. Although it appears mostly white with black markings on the top of its wings, underneath those wings are yellowish-green. These butterflies have a wing spread of just about two inches. Males have only one spot on each wing, while females have two. As you probably know, you can find Cabbage Whites in most open spaces, including gardens, roadsides, parks and cities.

**4. Monarch butterflies** **migrate** to get away from the cold. However, they are the only insect that [migrates an average of 2,500 miles](http://www.care2.com/causes/monarch-butterflies-are-streaming-into-california-and-mexico.html) to find a warmer climate. The iconic North American Monarch has been greatly affected by [extreme weather events](http://www.care2.com/causes/a-good-year-wont-save-the-monarch-butterfly-but-this-solution-can.html), going through drastic dips and spikes in numbers over the past several decades. The overall pattern continues to point downward, with a 95 percent population decline over the last 20 years, but conservation efforts are helping: There were more [monarch butterflies](http://ecowatch.com/?s=monarch) migrating in 2015 than there were in 2014.

Monarch Butterfly. Photo credit: Thinkstock

**5. Monarchs are not the only butterfly that migrate**. The Painted Lady, [American Lady, Red Admiral](http://www.thebutterflysite.com/butterfly-migration.shtml), Cloudless Sulphur, Skipper, Sachem, Question Mark, Clouded Skipper, Fiery Skipper and Mourning Cloak are among the other butterflies that also migrate, but not as far as the Monarchs.

**6. The Common Buckeye Butterfly** **is** [**one of the most striking butterflies**](http://www.mnn.com/earth-matters/animals/photos/how-identify-10-common-butterfly-species/common-buckeye-butterfly#top-desktop), with its bold multicolored eyespots and thick upper-wing bars, all designed to frighten away any birds that might be tempted to chomp on them. If you look under its wings, you'll find a more abstract profusion of brown, orange and beige. These insects are pretty common all over North and Central America, although you won't find them in the Pacific Northwest or in the far north of Canada.

The Common Buckeye Butterfly. Photo credit: Thinkstock

**7. The Orange Barred Sulphur Butterfly** **is one that you can find all over the Americas and the Caribbean**. It's very distinctive, being bright yellow with patches of orange marking both forewings and hindwings. Females tend to be bigger and darker than their male counterparts and unusually, just like the adult butterflies, the caterpillars also have bright yellow bodies segmented by dark stripes.

The Orange Barred Sulphur Butterfly. Photo credit: Thinkstock

**8. Speaking of caterpillars**, how much do you know about the [life cycle of a butterfly](http://www.enchantedlearning.com/subjects/butterfly/allabout/)? The butterfly starts its life as an egg, laid on a leaf. The caterpillar (larva) hatches from the egg and eats leaves or flowers. It loses its skin many times as it grows, increasing greatly in size. Eventually it turns into a pupa, or chrysalis and finally a beautiful adult butterfly emerges and the cycle continues.

**9. An adult butterfly has a very short life**: just three to four weeks. However, the entire life cycle of a butterfly can range between 2 and 8 months, depending on the species. Some migratory butterflies, such as the North American Monarch, can live as long as 7 to 8 months in one generation.

**10. The Giant Swallowtail Butterfly, as its name implies, is** [**one of the biggest butterflies**](http://entnemdept.ufl.edu/creatures/citrus/giantswallowtail.htm), with a wing spread of four to seven inches. The female is once again bigger than the male. It too is found throughout North America and sometimes as far south as South America. These butterflies are called “swallow" because they have long tails on their hind wings that resemble the long, pointed tails of the birds known as swallows.

The Giant Swallowtail Butterfly. Photo credit: Brian Gratwicke

Be sure to get outside this summer and look around for butterflies and other wildlife in your backyard. If you see a butterfly but aren't sure about the species, you can consult this [handy identification guide](http://www.discoverlife.org/mp/20q?guide=Butterflies).

<https://kidskonnect.com/animals/butterfly/>

Butterflies are an insect that live anywhere from 2 days to as long as 11 months. They go through a four-step process called metamorphosis – from egg, to caterpillar, to chrysalis to a butterfly. Keep reading for more interesting butterfly facts.

* Butterflies are insects, but large scaly wings set them apart. These wings allow them to fly but only when their body temperature is above 86 degrees.
* The fastest butterflies can fly up to 30 miles per hour.
* Scientists estimate that there are 28,000 species of butterflies throughout the world.
* Most butterflies are found in tropical rainforests, but they can live in all climates and altitudes of the world.
* The butterfly does migrate to avoid cold weather.
* Many believe butterflies got their name because they would fly around the buckets of milk on farms. While the milk was being churned into butter, many noticed these flying insects would appear and soon they were being called butterflies.
* Butterflies have three body parts, like all other insects: the head, the thorax (chest), and the abdomen (bottom). The butterfly’s four wings and six legs are attached to the thorax.
* Butterflies are colorful for many reasons. The colors help them attract a mate and absorb heat and the color also helps them blend in among the flowers when they are feeding.
* Butterflies change four times during their lives in a process which is called metamorphosis. They are born as an egg (stage 1). Next they turn into a caterpillar, or larvae (stage 2). This caterpillar will eat constantly – it loves leaves and flowers – and will grow and grow through this stage of its life.
* As the caterpillar grows, it skin will spilt and molt or shed its skin. When the caterpillar has grown several thousand times its original size, it goes into a resting stage. This is when the caterpillar becomes a pupa, or chrysalis (stage 3).
* Finally, the chrysalis breaks open and a butterfly comes out (stage 4). Now the adult butterfly will begin the process all over again by laying eggs of its own.
* Most butterflies live on the nectar and pollen from flowers.
* Butterflies have a long, flexible, tube-like tongue that goes down into the nectar of the flower. They suck the nectar up through this tongue.
* Female butterflies are usually larger than males and they live longer.
* Butterflies can live anywhere from 2 days to 11 months.