**Butterflies in your garden**

Watch out for the silent summer fluttering of garden visitors like the red admiral and orange tip. If you live in north London you are slightly more likely to see the wall brown butterfly, often called ‘the London Eye’ during the eighteenth century. South of the Thames, you have more chance of seeing the speckled wood, which does not share its name with a famous landmark.

**Butterflies and moths in London**

Butterflies are found in a range of places in London. Some are quite rare - like the richly-coloured purple hairstreak only found in the canopy of old oak trees, others like the meadow brown can be found in long grass in many parks and gardens. The chalk meadows to the south of London are particularly delightful, look here for marbled whites, and dark green fritillaries as well as the rare and secretive small blue. Some butterflies, like the Camberwell Beauty, and the red admiral only come to this country during summer, spending winter in the warmer climate of continental Europe.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jan</th>
<th>Feb</th>
<th>Mar</th>
<th>Apr</th>
<th>May</th>
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<tr>
<td>Hibernates</td>
<td>Feeds on clover, birdsfoot trefoil, black medick, restharrow</td>
<td>Feeds on clover etc</td>
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<td>Hibernates at base of grasses</td>
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<td><strong>Meadow brown</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Hibernates</td>
<td>Feeds on smooth meadow grass</td>
<td>Mates</td>
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<td>Hibernates at base of grasses</td>
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<td><strong>Orangetip</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Small tortoiseshell</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Hibernates</td>
<td>Feeds on holly buds</td>
<td>Feeds on ivy buds</td>
<td>Dormant among ivy</td>
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<td>Migrate to S. Europe</td>
<td>Arrives</td>
<td>Feeds on nettle</td>
<td>Feeds on nettle</td>
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<td>Flies south</td>
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**Nettles**

Are important to the caterpillars of peacock, small tortoiseshell, red admiral and comma. A sunny spot is essential so butterflies can find them. Put them in a big pot if you don’t want them in your border. Cut back in late June to get new growth for the second brood of caterpillars. Excellent compost activator too.

If you are interested in taking part in a survey of butterflies in your garden this summer, contact Butterfly Conservation on 0870 7744309.
Choosing plants for butterflies and bees

- Always choose single flowered varieties. A mixture of flowers attracts more helpful insects and less pests.
- Link sunny borders around the edge of your garden for choice browsing.
- Aim to have plants in flower from February to November, all the time when hungry butterflies are on the wing (see the calendar overleaf).
- Avoid planting for only one season at the expense of others, and expect to find most butterflies in summer.

Good nectar flowers for butterflies

Butterflies’ taste in flowers will vary slightly from year to year — depending on climate, and alternative food sources. These common plants are some top favourites.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spring</th>
<th>Summer</th>
<th>Autumn</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Blackthorn</td>
<td>Campions</td>
<td>Buddleia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bramble</td>
<td>Ragged robin</td>
<td>Field scabious</td>
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<td>Willow</td>
<td>Birdsfoot trefoil</td>
<td>Lobelia</td>
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<td>Valerian</td>
<td>Raspberry</td>
<td>Phlox</td>
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<td>Red valerian</td>
<td>Teasel</td>
<td>Lavender</td>
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<tr>
<td>Honesty</td>
<td>Hemp agrimony</td>
<td>Mint</td>
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<tr>
<td>Forget-me-not</td>
<td>Common fleabane</td>
<td>Privet</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aubretia</td>
<td>Yarrow</td>
<td>Statice</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hebe</td>
<td>Cranesbill</td>
<td>French Marigold</td>
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<td>Woundwort</td>
<td>Purple loosestrife</td>
<td>Marjoram</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alyssum</td>
<td>Knapweed</td>
<td>Runner Bean</td>
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<td>Wallflower</td>
<td>Thistle</td>
<td>Ivy</td>
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<td>Primrose</td>
<td>Chives</td>
<td>Heathc</td>
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<td>Hyacinth</td>
<td>Wild Thyme</td>
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</tbody>
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Essential caterpillar food plants Remember they need sunshine!

- Birdsfoot trefoil or black medic
- Dock or sorrel
- Garlic mustard or dames violet
- Cuckoo flower
- Stinging nettle
- Hop
- Holly and ivy
- Common or alder buckthorn
- Nasturtium
- Honesty
- Sweet Rocket

- common blue
- small copper
- orange tip, painted lady large, large, small and green-vened white
- orange tip
- small tortoiseshell, comma, peacock, red admiral
- comma
- holly blue
- brimstone
- large white, small white
- orange-tip
- orange-tip

Grasses

- Annual meadow grass
- Cocksfoot
- Sheeps fescue
- Timothy
- Yorkshire fog

- meadow brown, gatekeeper, wall
- large skipper, ringlet, meadow brown, speckled wood, wall
- meadow brown, grayling
- skippers, marbled white
- skippers

Some of the best flowers for bumbles

Fat and furry bumble bees need nectar too — and need our help in getting it, many species are rare or threatened. Try these flowers for happy humble bumbles, remember single-flowered varieties have most nectar and pollen.

- Selfheal
- Primrose
- Deadnettle
- Vetches
- Comfrey
- Borage

- Purple loosestrife
- Beans
- Nasturtium
- Golden rod
- Clovers
- Lupins

- Hawthorn
- Raspberry
- Apple
- Azalea
- Flowering currant

- Foxglove
- Forget-me-not
- Hyssop
- Bluebell

Moths

Watch out for spectacularly large and elegant hawkmoths, with caterpillars the size of a little finger, or the small intensely red and black burnet moths, which fly by day. Supply night time nectar for late fliers with evening primrose, nicotiana, honeysuckle, and nightscented stock.