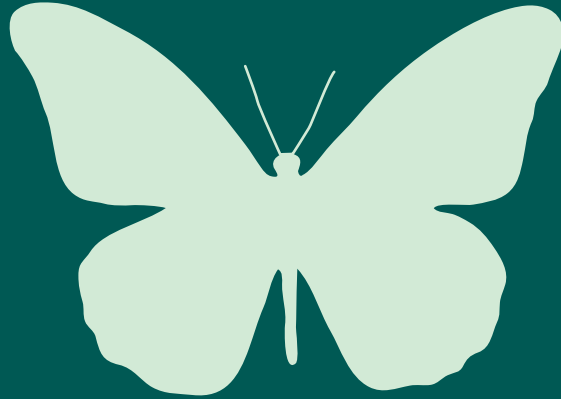


Large Butterflies

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



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.



PALE SWALLOWTAIL

(*Papilio eurymedon*)

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



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.

Visitor Centers

ARDENWOOD HISTORIC FARM

Fremont (510) 796-0663
awvisit@ebparks.org

BLACK DIAMOND MINES

Antioch (925) 757-2620
bdvisit@ebparks.org

COYOTE HILLS REGIONAL PARK

Fremont (510) 795-9385
chvisit@ebparks.org

CRAB COVE at CROWN BEACH

Alameda (510) 521-6887
ccove@ebparks.org

SUNOL REGIONAL WILDERNESS

Sunol (925) 862-2601
svisit@ebparks.org

TILDEN NATURE AREA/EEC and LITTLE FARM

Berkeley (510) 525-2233
tnarea@ebparks.org

Further Reading:

Common Butterflies of California, Stewart
California Butterflies, Garth & Tilden
Western Butterflies, Opler

Top Cover Photo:

Anise Swallowtail (*Papilio zelicaon*)

Bottom Cover Photo:

Buckeye (*Junonia coenia*)

This brochure is provided as a public service of the Interpretive and Recreation Services Department of the East Bay Regional Park District. For more information, call one of the visitor centers listed above.

🌿 EAST BAY REGIONAL PARK DISTRICT

2950 Peralta Oaks Ct., P.O. Box 5381
Oakland, CA 94605-0381
(510) 635-0135

TDD phone (510) 633-0460

www.ebparks.org



12/05

Common Butterflies of the East Bay Regional Parks



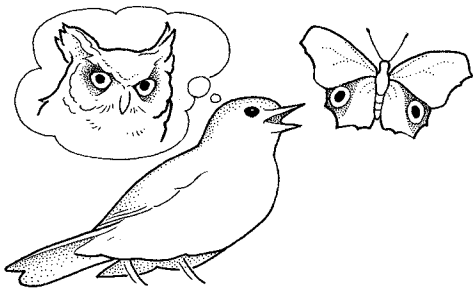
East Bay Regional Park District

www.ebparks.org

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."

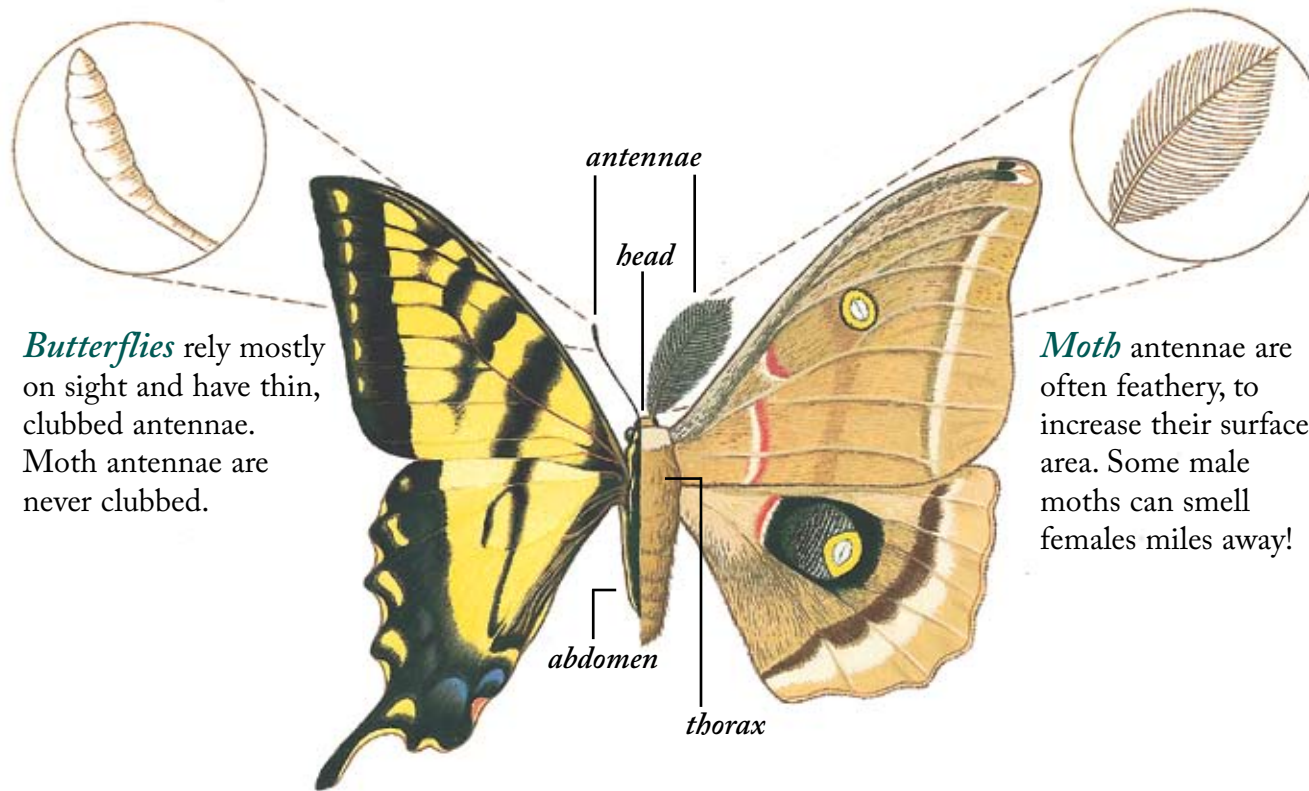


Through time, these scales have become arranged into countless color patterns that serve to warn, defend, camouflage, and identify other butterflies of the same species. Alameda and Contra Costa Counties are home to at least 93 different kinds of butterflies.



Butterflies & 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.



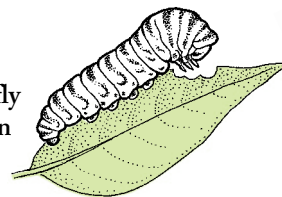
Butterflies rely mostly on sight and have thin, clubbed antennae. Moth antennae are never clubbed.

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

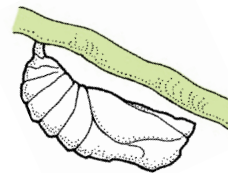
Butterflies as Quick-Change Artists

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.

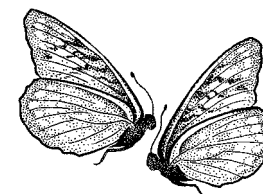


2. CATERPILLARS (larvae) are eating machines. In several weeks, one of these voracious plant-eaters may grow from 3/8 of an inch to over 5 inches in length, 13 times its original size!



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. An adult's sole purpose is to continue its kind.



Butterflies are not only beautiful to look at, they are also important pollinators of many plants and provide food for a wide variety of birds, mammals, and reptiles, as well as other insects.

Protect Butterflies for the Future

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.

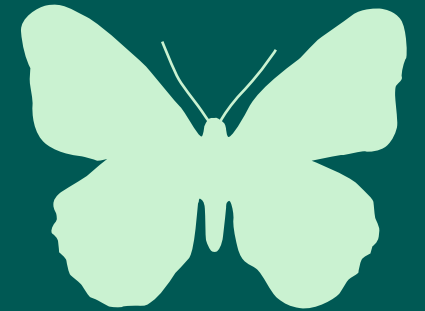
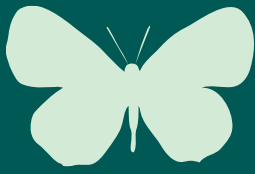
The East Bay Regional Parks provide a refuge for butterflies and other wildlife species. The butterflies listed in this brochure represent a small part of this amazing diversity.

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

Text by Ian Signer, Jan Southworth, & Alan Kaplan, EBRPD
 Photos by Bob Stewart, John Hafernik, & Steve Abbors
 Illustrations by Barbara Downs
 Design by Doyle Wegner, Exhibit Design, EBRPD

Small to Medium-Sized Butterflies

With tiny wingspans of $\frac{1}{2}$ to $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches (1 cm-4 cm), small butterflies have a quick, skipping flight. Medium-sized butterflies have wingspans $1\frac{1}{2}$ to $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches (4 cm-6 cm). Butterflies often sip nectar from flowers and water from mud puddles.



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*.



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.



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.



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.



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.



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.



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.



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.



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.

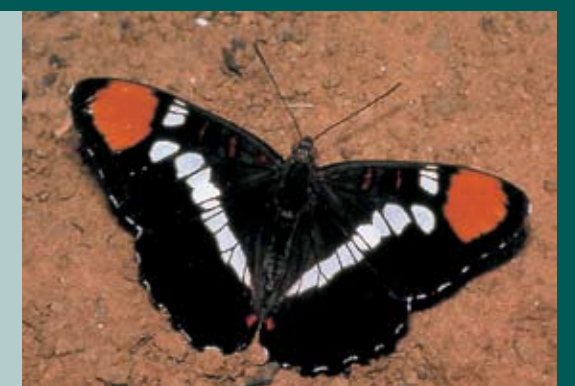


CALIFORNIA SISTER

(*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.



VARIABLE CHECKERSPOT

(*Euphydryas chalcedona*)

One of the most common butterflies in springtime. The adults have light yellow spots on a background that varies from entirely black to red-brown. **Host plants:** sticky monkey flower, California bee plant, Indian warrior, and English plantain.



MOURNING CLOAK

(*Nymphalis antiopa*)

This butterfly's striking upperside earned it the name Camberwell beauty in England. It is among the few species that overwinters as an adult and can be seen on warm winter and early spring days.

Host plants: willow, poplar, and alder.

