

Make a butterfly feeder

Butterflies are attracted by the scent, the colour and the warmth of flower petals. They feed on the nectar and by moving from flower to flower, plant to plant, they accidentally transport pollen from one to another. This is why insects such as butterflies, bees, bumblebees and others are called pollinators.

A butterfly feeder therefore not only brings colour and joy to your garden but once in your garden, these beautiful and beneficial pollinators will also help transferring pollen between plants.

When you observe the comings and goings at the butterfly feeder make notes on what the butterflies look like, what time of the day it the busiest, what other insects you can see coming to the feeder. How many butterflies can you identify? Have a look at the National Park and Wildlife Service’s Butterfly guide (available on www.livingearth.ie) and count which butterfly species you see how often. Is there a species that’s around much more often than others?



Small Copper



Large White



Marsh Fritillary

You will see many different species of butterflies coming to your feeder. Image credit: National Parks and Wildlife Service.



What you need

- Coloured or white paper
- Optional: coloured markers
- Bottle cap
- Pencil
- Scissors
- Wooden stick
- Sellotape
- Cotton wool
- Sugar
- Water
- Small bowl

What to do

1. Draw a big flower on your sheet of paper and cut it out. Colour it in if you like.
2. Take a piece of Sellotape and form a tight loop. Stick this to the top of the bottle cap and then stick the bottle cap onto the centre of your flower. The bottle cap is now your flower's pistil (the yellow part in the middle).
3. Use some Sellotape to tape the wooden stick to the back of the flower. Make sure the wooden stick holds the bottle cap on the other side of the flower too.
4. Now make the sugar mix: add 1 part sugar to 10 part water in a small bowl and mix until the sugar is dissolved.
5. Dip the cotton wool into the sugar mix. Then stick the cotton wool into the bottle cap.
6. That's it! Find a place for your butterfly feeder and, after a while, watch butterflies come and go and enjoy their meal.

How many butterflies can you identify?

Can you see any other insects feasting on the butterfly feeder?

Replace the cotton wool regularly with a new piece of sugar water soaked cotton wool.



Create a large flower and, with a loop of Sellotape, tape a bottle cap right into the centre of the flower.



Tape the wooden stick to the back of the flower. Then prepare the sugar water, soak some cotton wool in it and place the soaked cotton wool into the bottle cap. Now find a nice spot (outside) for your butterfly feeder. Make sure to replace the old cotton wool regularly with a new piece of sugar water soaked cotton wool. Photos: Cordula Weiss