

Butterfly bonkers

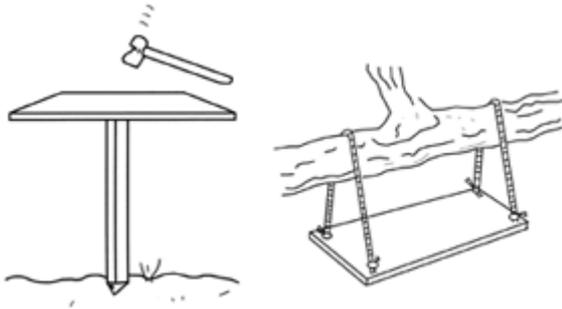
Our butterflies are tropical and need certain plants that might grow in a jungle, to live off, and lots of heat to keep them warm. But you will see lots of other types of butterflies in your garden that are happy living in Britain.



You could encourage more of them by doing one or both of the following things.

Make a butterfly table

Make a small table that looks like either of the following. Set it up in your garden.



- Experiment with brightly coloured cut out flowers with a hole in the middle. Place these over cups of sugar and water. Record which colours are visited most.
- Use saucers with cotton wool soaked in a sugar solution (Add one teaspoon of sugar to two tablespoons of water). These will attract the butterflies to come and feed.

Make a butterfly garden

Choose a sunny corner of your garden (it doesn't have to be big). If it is a bit overgrown and weedy it will be all the better.

You will need:

- Tools: spade, rake, buckets, trowel and watering can.
- Seeds and plants
- Fertilizer

Dig and rake over the ground and take off any stones, litter and bits of wood etc.

If you have any of the following weeds in your butterfly garden leave a clump of each as butterflies like to eat them:

- Nettle
- Thistle
- Ragwort
- Mixed Grasses.

Scatter the fertilizer thinly over the ground and rake in.

Plant a selection of the following plants because butterflies like to get their nectar from them:

- Buddleia
- Lavender
- Honesty
- Hyssop
- Golden Rod
- Iceplant
- Aubretia
- Sedum.

Sow any seeds in Spring when the ground warms up. Sow them thinly onto the soil, lightly cover with soil using your rake and give your plot a really good watering.

Handy tips:

- Try and keep the different plants separate so that you can keep a note of which butterfly uses which plant.
- Sow any gaps between plants with different grass seeds
- Make name cards for each plant so it will be easier to record which butterfly uses which plant.

Butterflies are the only insects with really good eyesight and they can definitely see the colour red.