



Butterflies in action

The butterflies and moths will be more or less active depending on the time of day and the temperature.

But you'll always be able to see them doing fascinating things!

Keep your eyes wide open and look for two of the following:

☒ **A butterfly feeding**

Butterflies settle on a flower or fruit. Sometimes they touch the food with their proboscis or feet to taste it. Then they unroll their proboscis to suck up the nectar or fruit juice.

☒ **A female butterfly laying her eggs**

To choose a host plant, a female butterfly tests the leaves with her feet. If the leaf contains the right chemical compounds, she lays an egg under a leaf. Some species lay groups of eggs, in clusters or rows.

☒ **A pair mating**

The male and female butterflies are joined to each other at the tips of their abdomens. The pair mates sort of "back to back"! They generally stay still while mating, but if they have to take flight to protect themselves, they remain attached even in the air.

☒ **A butterfly defending its territory**

(Often a blue *Morpho* or a white *Morpho*) Butterflies patrol their territory by flying in zig-zag patterns or in spirals. They chase other butterflies away and may even try to push them off plants where they are resting or feeding.

☒ **A butterfly at rest**

These insects stay still, hidden in the vegetation. Moths usually keep their wings open when they are resting, whereas butterflies (except Papilionidae) keep theirs closed. Resting allows them to warm themselves in the sun and gives their vital functions, like digestion, time to work properly.