



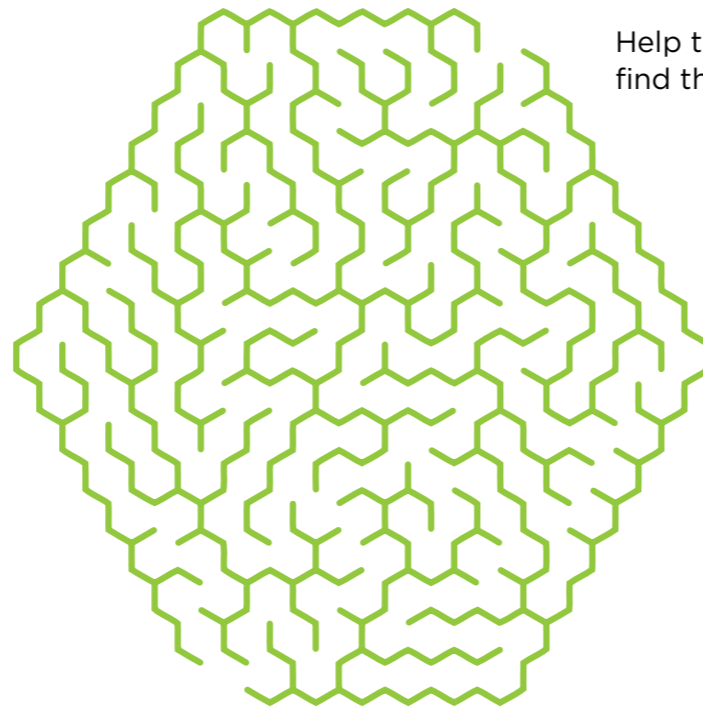
NatureScot

Scotland's Nature Agency
Buidheann Nàdair na h-Alba

Moths



The colourful Elephant Hawk-moth (above) is one of Scotland's biggest moths. It flies at night, usually during May and June. Beautifully coloured in pink and olive green, it can have a wingspan of 60mm. The caterpillars of this moth look like mini-elephant trunks, and that's where we think the name Elephant Hawk-moth comes from.



Help the moth to find the flowers



Moths have a very simple life cycle. The adult lays eggs (usually on plants) which hatch into caterpillars (larvae), these then feed before transforming into cocoons (pupae). From the cocoons the moths will emerge. How long those stages take depends on the type (species) of moth.

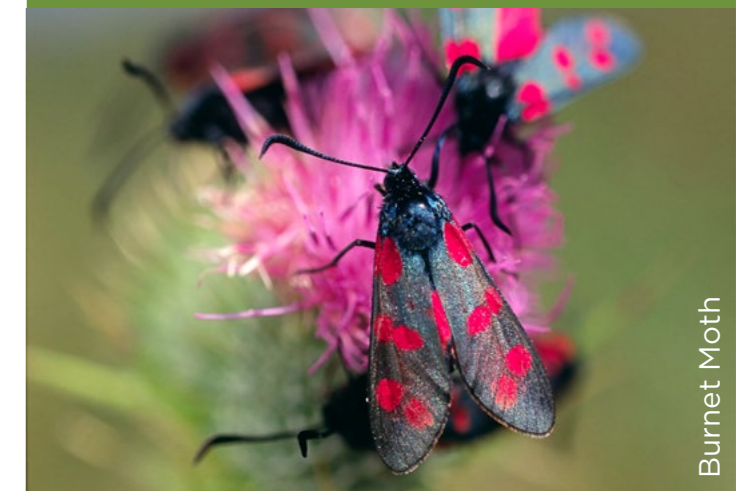


The Garden Tiger moth (above) is spectacular. With black and white upper wings and orange and black hindwings. These colours are designed to tell would be predators to back off. Garden Tiger moth caterpillars, called 'woolly bears' because they are really hairy! They love to feed on nettles and dock leaves.

Moths and caterpillars are a vital part of nature's food cycle. Caterpillars are a food source for many birds, you may have seen blue tits and other birds feeding their chicks caterpillars. Bats feed on night-flying moths. Frogs, toads, lizards, hedgehogs and spiders also eat moths and caterpillars.



There are some fantastic names for moths and their caterpillars. 'Scarlet Tiger', 'Emperor' (above), 'Ghost', 'Goat' and 'Peppered' are all brilliant moth species names. Some are named after the things they sort of look like such as Peach Blossom, and the Goat moth is probably named after the smell that's left on trees its caterpillars bore into - it's pretty stinky if you get close!



Burnet Moth

WORDSEARCH

C	A	T	E	R	P	I	L	L	A	R
H	S	Q	U	L	Z	W	H	V	D	E
R	A	B	A	N	N	I	C	R	F	G
Y	V	J	Y	B	L	E	O	O	L	I
S	T	R	K	E	O	K	C	R	N	T
A	P	U	P	S	W	J	O	E	M	G
L	H	L	U	O	R	Q	O	P	M	A
I	B	Z	C	J	Y	E	N	M	R	C
S	W	V	S	B	U	R	N	E	T	N
X	A	R	O	H	T	M	O	T	H	P

Words to find:
CATERPILLAR, CHRYSALIS, BURNET,
CINNABAR, PUPA, COCOON, THORAX,
EMPEROR, TIGER, MOTH

MYTH BUSTER

There are around 1,500 types of moth known to live in Scotland. Some people think that moths eat clothes but only a very few species do, and it's the caterpillar that does the chewing. And did you know they prefer dirty, damp clothes! Best to keep your bedroom tidy.

Did you know that moths and butterflies are from the same family? There are many more moth species than butterflies though and a lot of them are just as beautiful as butterflies!

You can get up close and personal with moths by attending a moth trapping event in your area. Moths are caught with a light trap, and released alive after being identified and counted. Try the **Moths page on the Butterfly Conservation website**.

LAUGH OUT LOUD :-)

Q. What is a moth's favourite subject at school?

A. Mathematics!

PHOTOGRAPHY CREDITS

Poster: Clouded Buff Moth by David Whitaker. This side: Elephant Hawk Moth, Garden Tiger Moth and Emperor Moth all by David Whitaker. Burnet Moth by Lorne Gill.