There are over 100 day-flying moths in the UK, but far more only come out at night so to see them requires some detective work! You could build a moth trap using the instructions on our website, or you could hang up a white sheet with a bright torch shining on it. Many moth caterpillars can be found during the daytime, most commonly from May to September. You can also try looking in your garden with a torch on mild winter nights when some moth caterpillars come out to feed.

Identify moths and their caterpillars

White Ermine

This is a common moth and the adults can be found from April to October, depending on the habitat and location. The caterpillars feed on a range of trees and bushes, including Hawthorn and Blackthorn.

Brimstone Moth

These moths are early fliers, flying in April and May in moorland and open country. Both males and females have large eye spots on their wings, but only the males have bright orange underwings. Caterpillars feed on Heather and Bramble.

Emperor Moth

This moth gets its name from the way it visits flowers to feed on nectar, hovering in front of them like a Hummingbird. It flies in the daytime, especially on sunny days, and can often be seen feeding on garden flowers such as Fuchsia, while its caterpillars feed on Bedstraw.

Humming-bird Hawk-moth

There are over 2,500 different moth species in the UK with 1,500 found in Scotland. Most adult moths feed on nectar, but some have no mouth parts so they can only live a few days.

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Find out more about moths...

If you have enjoyed looking for the moths on this sheet and want to find out more about moths, butterflies and their caterpillars there are lots of places to go for more information. There is also a lot you can do to help butterflies and moths, whether you want to make your garden more moth-friendly, send us records of caterpillars you have found or take part in a national survey to help our conservation efforts.

Munching Caterpillars
www.munchingcaterpillars.org

Butterfly Conservation
www.butterfly-conservation.org

The Big Butterfly Count
www.bigbutterflycount.org

UK Moths
www.ukmoths.org.uk

The National Moth Recording Scheme
www.mothsociety.org

Wild About Gardens
www.wildaboutgardens.org.uk

Tips for looking for moths and caterpillars

Here are some tips to increase your chances of finding what you are looking for:

• Different species of moth like different habitats. Check in a book before you set your trap to choose which area to try.
• Larger moths tend to come out later in the summer than many smaller moths. Try setting a trap in July or August to catch hawk-moths.
• Moth traps need to be placed in a sheltered spot. Make sure there is a cover to stop rain getting in or hitting the bulb.
• Many day-flying moths like to live in grassy meadows, go for a walk on a warm, still day to have the best chance of seeing them.
• Caterpillars can be found low down on plants or among leaf litter as well as higher up in bushes and trees, remember to search all through the vegetation.
• Use a guide to help identify any moths or caterpillars you find.
• If you’re not sure what species you have found, try to take a picture and upload it on our website for us to identify.

Visit our Website to find out more!
The Goat Moth caterpillar eats wood and because it is so hard to digest it can take four years to reach its full size.

Did you know? Most moths fly at night but there are some that come out in the daytime.