



**Butterfly Conservation**

Saving butterflies, moths and our environment

# Gardening for Butterflies in Small Spaces

Short on space?!  
Be creative and grow  
a vertical garden

PICTURES: MEGAN LOWE, NEIL HULME,  
DEAN MORLEY, SHUTTERSTOCK

Help butterflies, moths and other pollinators by growing nature-friendly plants in your outdoor space, whatever the size. When planted with the right plants, pots on a doorstep, hanging baskets or even a fabric shoe rack hung on a sunny wall can provide important food for butterflies, moths, and their caterpillars. Furthermore, studies have shown that gardening and being among nature can improve physical and mental health, so it could be good for you too! Choose nectar-rich flowers for butterflies and moths and provide food for caterpillars and you'll soon attract these beautiful insects. Here are some suggestions for plants that are easy to grow in smaller spaces:

## Grow a Nectar Bar

● **Thyme** – this low-growing herb is great for window boxes or vertical gardens that are in full sun or part shade.

● **Nicotiana** – these sweetly fragrant flowers bloom in the evening providing a fantastic nectar source for moths.

● **Verbena** – grown in a pot or against a wall these tall, long-lasting blooms provide a great energy boost for bees and butterflies.

● **Scabious** – these blue pin-cushion shaped flowers attract garden butterflies such as Peacock or Small Tortoiseshell.



## Cater for Caterpillars

● **Common Bird's-Foot-Trefoil** – this trailing perennial provides a burst of bright yellow flowers in the summer months and is an important foodplant for the Common Blue butterfly.

● **Mint** – the leaves of this easy-to-grow herb make a tasty treat for the caterpillars of the beautiful day-flying Mint Moth.

● **Fuchsia** – a favourite snack for the impressive Elephant Hawk-moth caterpillar, fuchsias are especially suited to being grown in pots or hanging baskets in partly sunny, sheltered spots.

● **Nasturtium** – a great companion plant to various vegetables, they are a delicious dish for Small and Large White butterflies.



## Care for Plants and the Planet

● **Grow from seed** – it's easy, inexpensive, and enjoyable too!

● **Always choose peat-free compost**

● **Cut down on plastic** by reusing household items such as toilet roll tubes or tubs to sow your seeds in. Remember to drill drainage holes to prevent waterlogging.

● **Avoid harmful pesticides** – find wonder in the wildlife that appreciates your efforts or look up eco-friendly alternatives.

● **Make your own plant labels** from natural or recycled materials. For a rustic look collect some fallen twigs and use an old potato peeler to shave the bark off one end, creating a flat surface for you to write on.

For more information and activity guides visit: [www.butterfly-conservation.org](http://www.butterfly-conservation.org)  
Butterfly Conservation is a charity registered in England and Wales (254937) and in Scotland (SC039268)

