

# The Butterfly Project



## A Kids for Saving Earth Action Program

**Can you say Lepidoptera?** Let's practice....Lepi ---dop--tera, lepi--dop--tera. You know how scientists are. They want to use fancy, difficult words to describe things. Let's show them we can do it too. Lepidoptera. We did it!

**So what's a Lepidoptera?** It is either a butterfly or a moth and it's the official name for the scientific family of butterflies and moths.

**Every butterfly begins its life** as an egg laid on a plant by a female butterfly. A tiny caterpillar (larva) hatches from the egg, and its whole job is to eat and grow. It sheds its skin 4 times and gets new skin as it grows. When it loses its skin the last time it begins spinning a thick belt that attaches it to a plant stem. Then it forms an outer shell called a pupa (or crysalis). After 10-14 days the butterfly emerges from its shell. This change is called metamorphosis.



### More interesting facts.

Did you know that there are butterflies and moths on every continent on Earth except Antarctica?

Scientists think that there are over 12,000 species of butterflies and up to 250,000 species of moths.

Most moth caterpillars make cocoons, but butterfly caterpillars don't.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service reports there are 20 butterflies and moths listed on the endangered species list. Research also shows that the female monarch butterfly numbers are declining. One reason for the disappearance of lepidoptera is the loss of the land areas(habitat) they need for their home and the use of pesticides and other chemicals.

The average life of a butterfly is about one month but some live only a few days. There are a few--like the Monarch--that can live as long as 8 months.

Most butterflies are not good pollinators because pollen doesn't stick to their legs and tongues. The Monarch, however, is a good pollinator and it loves milkweeds. Protect and plant milkweed. Moths, however, are good pollinators, especially hummingbird moths.

Butterflies By Melody, Shang Hai, China



**Butterfly Project:** There's lots to do to help protect butterflies. Check out the following activities to get you started.

Protect Monarchs and other butterflies. Learn about Monarchs and plant a backyard habitat for butterflies. Order and plant milkweed seed to attract Monarchs.

**Tip the scales for butterflies:** Tiny scales create the designs you see on butterfly wings. Draw an outline of a butterfly. Gather old magazines and tear out the color pages. (Recycle the magazines.) Cut colors in tiny pieces and then use them to create brightly colored mosaic designs on the butterfly. Create a poster with your butterfly that says **Protect Butterfly Habitat**. Place the poster in public areas.

### Wonderful Butterfly Web sites

<http://www.butterflyschool.org>

[National Geographic Kids](http://www.nationalgeographic.com/kids)

<http://www.thebutterflysite.com/>

Click on the Butterflies or Moth

Kärner Blue Butterfly

Queen Alexandra's Birdwing

Luna Moth

Hummingbird Moth



Draw butterflies! Click here!

Jeany Stetler loved and cared for animals. When in need she was there to help them. She was especially fond of butterflies and raised and released thousands of butterflies and taught children about them. This Butterfly Project is dedicated to Jeany.