

**Caring for Creation
Half Term Family Challenge**

“Lord, you have made so many things,

How wisely you made them all!

The earth is filled with your creatures.”

Psalm 104:24 Good News Bible

Challenge your family to care for butterflies and caterpillars this winter!

***We know it's fun to have something we can do together as families over
Half Term so the Creation Care team thought you might like this
challenge!***

***(Creation Care Team: Heather and Paul Williams, Rachel Stevens,
Jonathan Heeb, Meryl Edward, Caroline Richardson, Janet Phythian)***



There are 59 species of butterfly in the UK.

**Can you find out their names?
What do they do in winter, and where do they go?**

Each butterfly species tackles the problems of a long, cold, wet, winter differently. The most common way for butterflies to survive winter is as caterpillars.

As vegetation dies off in autumn, the caterpillars will find a dry pile of leaves to hide under for the winter. It may seem like a long way to crawl to find a safe hiding place, but with over 4000 muscles, compared to our 629, they are quite capable of hunting out the safest of overwintering spaces! Some survive as adults sheltering inside the roofs of cool garages or sheds, or in thick vegetation such as ivy, while others survive as pupae. Sadly, butterflies are in decline. The Butterfly Conservation Trusts report a 76% drop in abundance or occurrence since 1976.

The Half Term Family Challenge:
Can you and your family do one, or all, of these actions?

1. Plant It

- Plant butterfly food plants for your garden. See The Woodland Trust for a list of these (<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/trees-woods-and-wildlife/animals/butterflies>)
- Make a wild area in your garden, allowing nettles to grow
- Make a bug hotel in a sheltered corner of your garden from a pile of twigs, wood and dry leaves. It doesn't have to be big. Here are some tips at Woodland Trust.
(<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/blog/2019/09/how-to-build-a-bug-hotel/>)

2. Leave It

- Leave sections of your garden wild over winter,
- If you must tidy, try to do so carefully, relocating any caterpillars or pupa that you find. (Be careful and use gloves, as some caterpillars have irritant hairs!)

3. Record It

- The Butterfly Conservation website can help you identify butterflies you've seen.
(<https://butterfly-conservation.org/uk-butterflies/a-to-z>)
- You can join in next July with The Big Butterfly Count
(<https://bigbutterflycount.butterfly-conservation.org>)
- You can submit records now on the iRecord app
- (Biological Records Centre <https://www.brc.ac.uk/irecord/>)

Email us to let us know how you get on!

With thanks to 'Wild Christian' A Rocha UK. A Rocha UK's Wild Christian scheme is a community of families and individuals exploring the connections between our Christian faith, the natural environment, and how we live.