



Pollinators and
Flowering Plants

Butterflies in winter

Age: 7-14

Topic: DT and Biology

Time: 1 hour



What should learners already know?

- Learners should have awareness of butterflies and their lifecycle.

What equipment will I need?

- Wood approx. 1.5 mm thick
- Nails
- Hammer
- Drilling machine
- Drill 7 mm
- Jigsaw
- Ruler
- Dry twigs or leaves

How can we show the learning?

- Talk to the class about why it is important to provide overwintering habitat for pollinators.
- The first butterflies we see in the spring are those that overwinter as full-grown individuals. Examples of day active species that overwinter are common brimstone, small tortoiseshell, peacock butterfly, and comma.
- When it starts to get cold in the autumn, these species look for a wintering place that is frost-free. If the butterfly is lucky, it will find an attic space, an old hollow tree, or a tree with deep furrows in the bark where it can hide.
- Old hollow trees have become rarer, which makes it difficult for butterflies to find good wintering grounds. One way to help butterflies with wintering grounds is to put up butterfly houses.



Did you know:
There are 59
different species of
butterfly in the UK.

How will learners explore this?

1. This activity involves building a house that butterflies can use as a home over the winter.
2. Start by building a house that is similar to a regular bird box (see description on the internet).
3. The important thing is to make three to four oblong holes instead of the round hole that bird boxes usually have. The butterfly house must be openable.
4. On the front of the box, measure and mark the oblong openings. The openings should be about 1x15 cm.
5. Drill a hole in each end of your markings with a drill of about 7 mm to get the blade of the jigsaw through.
6. Saw between the two holes to create an opening.
7. The 1 cm wide openings become the butterflies' entrances when they crawl in to spend the winter in the house.
8. Set up some twigs inside the house for the butterflies to use during their winter hibernation.
9. If you want, add some dry leaves for insulation, too.
10. Place the nest box in a dry and semi-sunny position.



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