


**Curriculum-based Outdoor Education Programmes
in Country Parks**

Shing Mun Country Park Field Trip Species Identification Guide

Butterflies

This guide only lists some butterfly species commonly found in Shing Mun Country Park. For other butterflies recorded in Hong Kong, please refer to other books such as *Hong Kong Butterflies* published by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department.

 As some butterflies and moths are poisonous, touching them may lead to allergy or poisoning. Therefore, you should only observe them at a distance and not touch them.

Updated on 9 March 2023

Identification of Butterflies



Swallowtails

Large size (average wingspan is 8 – 10 cm). Wings are mainly black with simple wing bands. Some of them have obvious wing tails and high flying speed.



Nymphalids

Medium to large size. Patterns and colours on their wings are very diverse. Some have wings with jagged edges and high flying speed. Some species (e.g. Tigers and Crows) have obvious white spots on their heads and thoraxes.



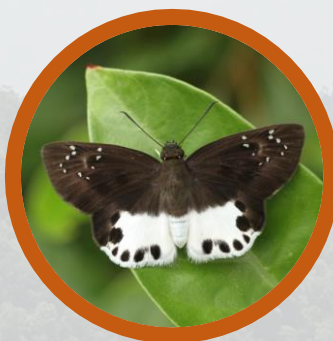
Whites and Yellows

Medium size (average wingspan is 5.5 – 6.5 cm). Wings are mainly white and yellow with black or red marks. Medium flying speed.



Blues

Small size (average wingspan is 3 – 3.5 cm). The colour of the underside of their wings are usually grey, and the upperside of their wings often have purplish blue markings.



Skippers

Small size. Bodies are usually brown. They often stay in dark and humid environments.



Metalmarks

Small size. Most males possess reduced front legs. Bodies are usually brown with white, black, or orange patterns.

Tips to Observe Butterflies

The Right Timing

Butterflies fly by rapidly flapping their wings, which makes it challenging to observe them when they are moving. So in what conditions are butterflies easy to observe? When a butterfly is resting, drinking water, or sucking nectar, it usually stays on the ground or plants. At these moments, the butterfly remains relatively stationary. You can then use binoculars or observe from the side to identify the butterfly by its characteristics, such as the wing colour and patterns on the wings.



▲ A common archduke on a leaf



▲ The ceylon blue glassy tiger is sucking nectar



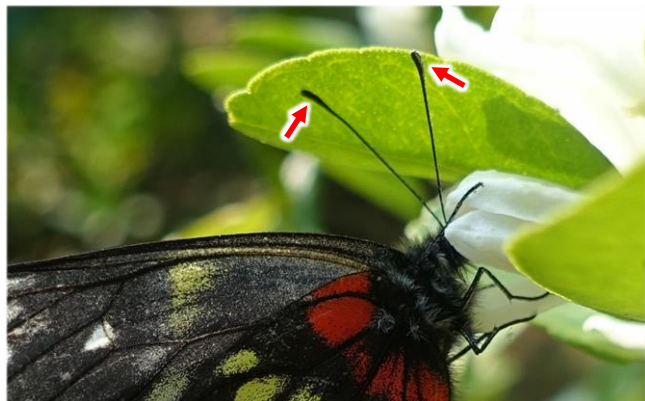
▲ The Chinese Peacock in the photo is drinking water on the ground

Butterflies? Moths?

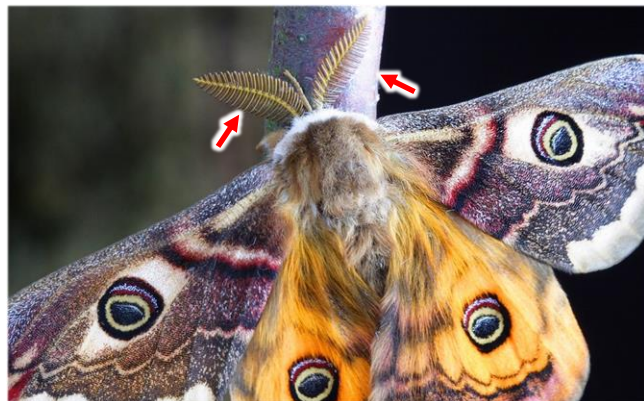
Since butterflies and moths are very similar in terms of their appearance, people always mix them up. Some people think butterflies are active during the day, and moths at night; the colours of butterflies are brighter, and moths are darker; butterflies rest their wings closed, and moths rest theirs open.



In fact, a more accurate way to differentiate between butterflies and moths is to observe their antennae. Butterfly antennae tend to be club-shaped at the end, while moth antennae tend to be leaf or feather shape. Next time when you see an insect that looks like a butterfly or moth, try to observe its antennae!



▲ Butterfly antennae look like a cotton swab



▲ Some moths have a feather-shaped antennae

Shing Mun Country Park Butterflies

(Swallowtails)



統帥青鳳蝶

Tailed Jay

Graphium agamemnon

The brown wings are covered with fine green spots.

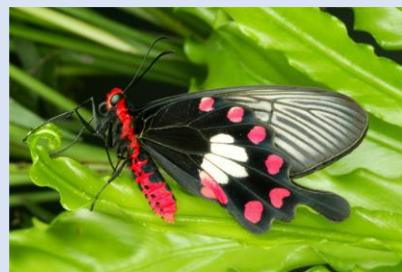


燕鳳蝶

White Dragontail

Lamproptera curius

The smallest swallowtail butterfly in Hong Kong. In addition to the transparent centre of the forewings, it also has an obvious wing tails.

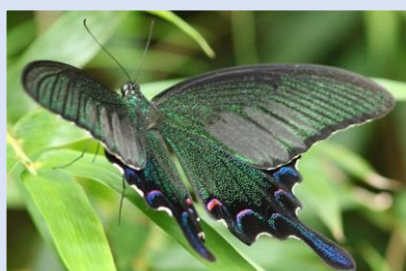


紅珠鳳蝶

Common Rose

Pachliopta aristolochiae

The head, thorax, and abdomen are red. There are red marks in the underside marginal areas.

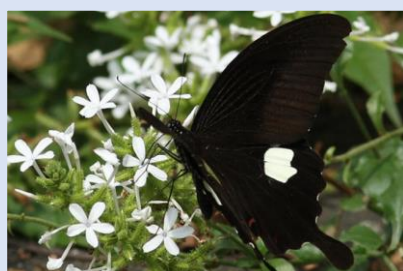


碧鳳蝶

Chinese Peacock

Papilio bianor

The black wings are covered with metallic bluish green scales. Also, there are conspicuous crescent-shaped red markings on the margin of its hindwings.



玉斑鳳蝶

Red Helen

Papilio helenus

It has obvious white markings on its hindwings and crescent-shaped red markings on the margin of its hindwings.



美鳳蝶

Great Mormon

Papilio memnon

The males have black wings with no wing tails and red spots near the thorax. The females are diverse in appearance and often have large white patches on the hindwings.

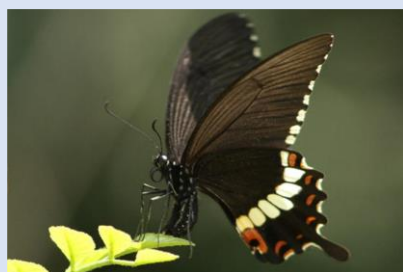


巴黎翠鳳蝶

Paris Peacock

Papilio paris

Small green dots can be seen from its black wings when reflected by the sun. There are two large blue markings near the wing tails.

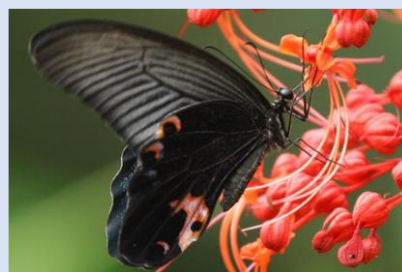


玉帶鳳蝶

Common Mormon

Papilio polytes

It has black wings. Horizontal milky stripes can be seen from the hindwings.



藍鳳蝶

Spangle

Papilio protenor

No wing tails and wings are slender. There are only few crescent-shaped red markings on the margin of its hindwings.

Shing Mun Country Park Butterflies (Swallowtails)



金裳鳳蝶

Golden Birdwing

Troides aeacus

The largest butterfly species in Hong Kong. The wings are black and the hindwings of the females are yellow with long black markings.



裳鳳蝶

Common Birdwing

Troides helena

It is very similar to the golden birdwing but is relatively small. Also, the females of this species have less black markings on their hindwings.

Shing Mun Country Park Butterflies

(Nymphalids)



網絲蛺蝶
Common Mapwing
Cyrestis thyodamas

The criss-cross patterns on the wings look like a map, hence the name "mapwing".



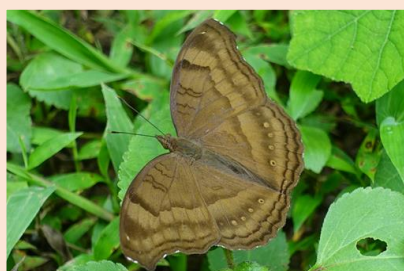
黑脈蛺蝶
Red Ring Skirt
Hestina assimilis

Its wings are black and white. Red spots can be found on the hindwings.



波紋眼蛺蝶
Grey Pansy
Junonia atlites

Light brown upperside. There are some orange eyespots on the edge of its wings.



鉤翅眼蛺蝶
Chocolate Pansy
Junonia iphita

Its body is brown and looks like a dead leaf.



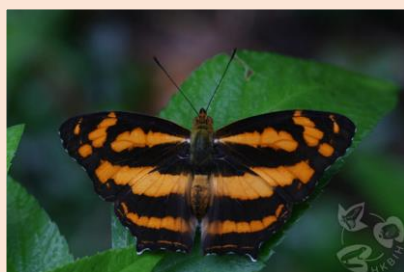
蛇眼蛺蝶
Lemon Pansy
Junonia lemonias

It is mainly brown and there are eyespots on its wings.



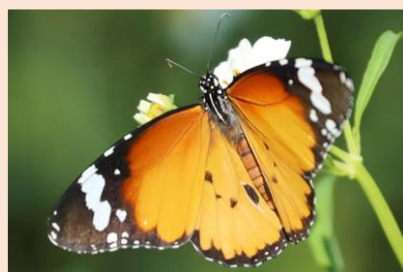
中環蛺蝶
Common Sailer
Neptis hylas

Upperside and underside of the wings are respectively dark brown and orange with white bands. Three horizontal white bands can be clearly seen when its wings are spread wide open.



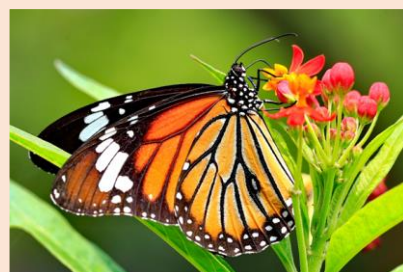
散紋盛蛺蝶
Common Jester
Symbrenthia lilaea

There are three horizontal orange bands on the upperside of its wings and irregular brown markings on the undersides of its wings.



金斑蝶
Plain Tiger
Danaus chrysippus

Its wings are orange with black and white markings near the apex parts.

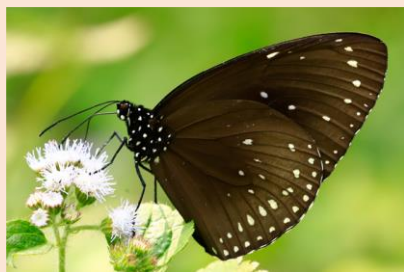


虎斑蝶
Common Tiger
Danaus genutia

Its wings are reddish orange and the black lines resemble the patterns of a tiger.

Shing Mun Country Park Butterflies

(Nymphalids)



藍點紫斑蝶
Blue-Spotted Crow
Euploea midamus

Its black-brown wings appear shiny purplish blue under sunlight. For the females, there are two rows of small white dots on the edge of the hindwings.



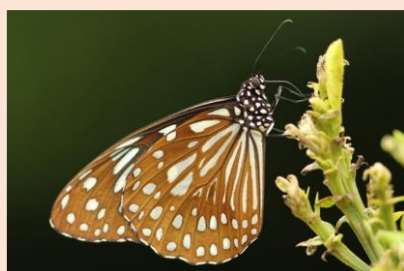
擬旖斑蝶
Ceylon Blue Glassy Tiger
Ideopsis similis

There are different sizes of light blue wing bands on its black-brown wings.



絹斑蝶
Glassy Tiger
Parantica aglea

The black-brown wings are covered with irregular sizes of white stripes.



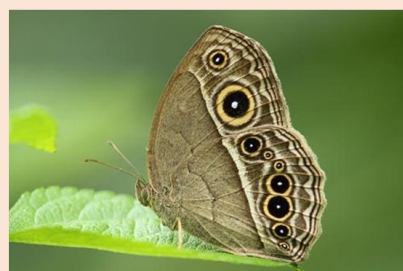
青斑蝶
Blue Tiger
Tirumala limniace

Scattered blue markings on the dark brown wings. Similar to the Ceylon blue glassy tiger, but the blue markings on the wings of this species are more disorganized.



小眉眼蝶
Dark-brand Bush Brown
Mycalesis mineus

There is a greyish yellow band in the centre of the underside of the wings, with several eyespots near the wing margins (four on the forewings and about seven on the hindwings).



平頂眉眼蝶
South China Bush Brown
Mycalesis mucianus

It is very similar to the dark-brand bush brown, except for the chamfered forewing apices.



矍眼蝶
Common Five-ring
Ypthima baldus

The wings are brown. There are one and two eyespots on each side of the forewings and hindwings, and six eyespots on the underside of the hindwings.



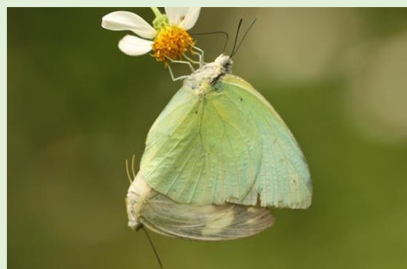
串珠環蝶
Large Faun
Faunis eumeus

A row of white dots of varying sizes can be seen on the brown wings.

Butterflies from
Danainae,
Satyridae, and
Amathusiini are
also members of
Nymphs!

Shing Mun Country Park Butterflies

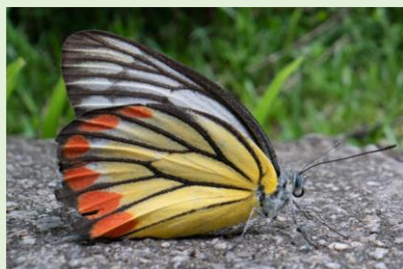
(White and Yellows)



遷粉蝶

Lemon Emigrant
Catopsilia pomona

The wings are mainly white (male) and yellow (female). There are black markings on the edges of the upperside of the wings.



優越斑粉蝶

Painted Jezebel
Delias hyparete

Its wings are mainly white, and there are red and yellow patterns on its forewings.



報喜斑粉蝶

Red-base Jezebel
Delias pasithoe

Wings are composed of four colours of black, white, red and yellow. It is one of the most observable butterflies because its flying speed is not fast.



槲黃粉蝶

Three-spot Grass Yellow
Eurema blanda

There are fine black spots on its yellow wings. It is very similar to the common grass yellow, but the outer edges of the forewings of this species are more rounded.



寬邊黃粉蝶

Common Grass Yellow
Eurema hecabe

Most body parts are yellow, and there are small reddish brown spots on its wings.



鶴頂粉蝶

Great Orange Tip
Hebomoia glaucippe

The largest White in Hong Kong. Its wings are mainly white with orange marks at the tip of the forewings.



橙粉蝶

Yellow Orange Tip
Ixias pyrene

Its wings are mainly yellow, with an orange patch on the forewings of the males. During the dry season, the edges of its wings have some fine brown spots.

Shing Mun Country Park Butterflies (Blues)



鈕灰蝶

Common Hedge Blue

Acytolepis puspa

Underside of its wings are pale grey with black spots. The males have wings with upperside metallic blue in colour.

Shing Mun Country Park Butterflies (Skippers)



沾邊裙弄蝶

Water Snow Flat

Tagiades litigiosus

Its hindwings near the end of the abdomen are white with black spots.



黑邊裙弄蝶

Dark Edged Snow Flat

Tagiades menaka

It is very similar to the water snow flat, but the black spots on its hindwings are linked up.



薑弄蝶

Grass Demon

Udaspes folus

A relatively large skipper. The upperside of its wings is dark brown. There are several white spots of varying sizes on its forewings and a large white spot in the centre of its hindwings.

Shing Mun Country Park Butterflies (Metalmarks)

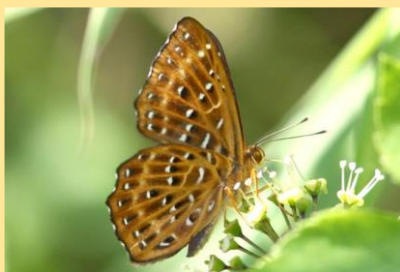


蛇目褐蛱蝶

Plum Judy

Abisara echerius

There are eyespots on the edges of its dark brown wings.

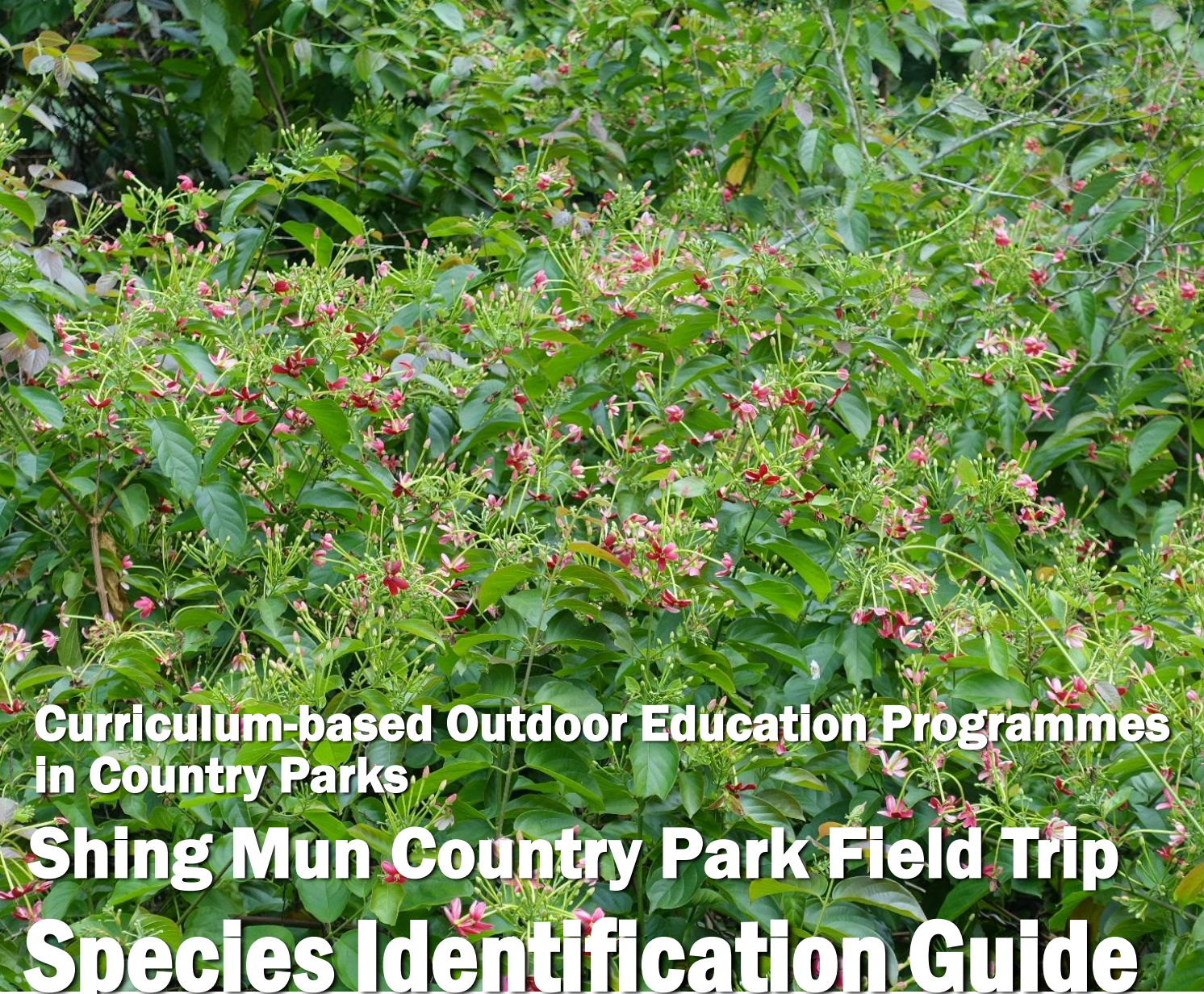


波蛱蝶

Punchinello

Zemeros flegyas


There are numerous black and white spots on the brownish red wings.








Curriculum-based Outdoor Education Programmes in Country Parks

Shing Mun Country Park Field Trip

Species Identification Guide

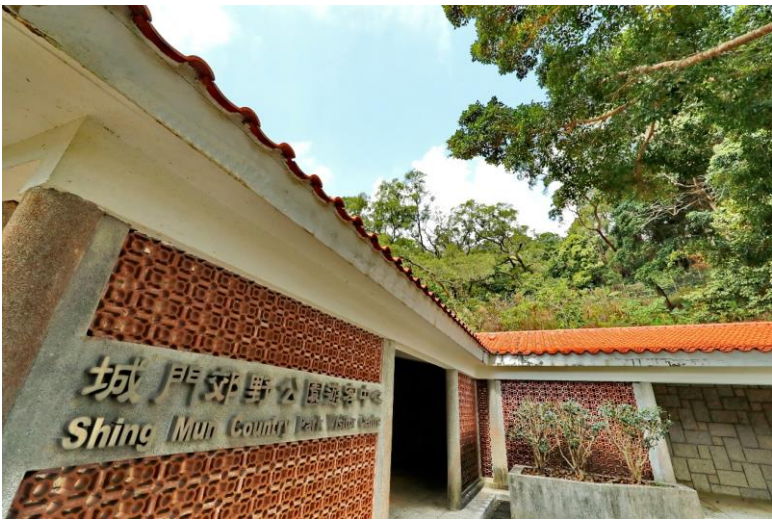
 As some plants are poisonous, touching them may lead to allergy or poisoning. Therefore, you should only observe them at a distance and not touch them.

Plants

<p>Fruiting period</p> <p>Flowering period</p> <p>Nectar plant</p> <p>Host plant</p> <p>Some examples of butterflies that use this plant as a host plant</p>	<div><p>馬利筋</p></div> <div><p>Blood-flower</p></div> <div><p><i>Asclepias curassavica</i></p></div> <div><p>Jan – Dec</p><p>N/A</p><p>  Glassy Tiger, Blue Tiger, Plain Tiger</p></div> <p>Although the whole plant is poisonous, it is still a host plant for many butterfly larvae, such as some tigers and crow butterflies. Its red and yellow flowers are bloomed all year round and are very attractive to butterflies.</p>	<p>Plant name (Chinese name, English name, scientific name)</p> <p>Description</p>
---	---	--

A. Visitor Centre

There is a grassy area near the Shing Mun Country Park Visitor Centre, which is surrounded by buildings and has nectar plants, such as *Bidens alba*, which are particularly attractive to blue and white and yellow butterflies.



白花鬼針草



English Name: **N/A**



Bidens alba

🌸 May – Dec

🦋 N/A

Ⓝ

It is commonly found on the roadside. The flowers with white petals resemble small chrysanthemums and are important sources of nectar for butterflies.



紅花酢漿草



Lavender Sorrel

Oxalis debilis

🌸 Mar – Dec

🦋 N/A

Ⓝ

Ⓜ

Pale Grass Blue


It is native to South America and is introduced to Hong Kong as an ornamental plant. It is now very common in Hong Kong. When it blooms, it provides nectar for animals like butterflies.




三裂葉蟛蜞菊

English Name: **N/A**

Wedelia trilobata

 Jan – Dec

 N/A



A highly adaptable plant which is introduced to Hong Kong for landslide recovery. Small bright yellow flowers which are bloomed all year round can attract butterflies and other insects to visit.

B. Catchwater

The catchwater brings rainwater from some of the nearby mountains to the Upper Shing Mun Reservoir, and the location shown in the right photo is close to the end of the channel. Some lidded cleistocalyx on the slope opposite the catchwater are attractive to some swallowtails and nymphs like the common bluebottle.



水翁

May – Jun
Aug – Sep



Lidded Cleistocalyx

It is commonly found on water side and riverbanks. Its little white flowers are sources of nectar for butterflies.



Cleistocalyx nervosum



鴨腳木

Aug – Sep
Dec – Feb



Pale Awlet



Ivy Tree

It is a common evergreen plant in Hong Kong. Its flowers (which bloom in winter) are a source of nectar that many insects (such as butterflies and bees) rely on in winter.



Schefflera heptaphylla

C. Butterfly Paradise (upper course)

There are several trees on the meadow that is surrounded by shrubs.



翅莢決明



Winged Cassia



Senna alata

Nov – Jan

Jan – Feb

Lemon Emigrant,
Three-spot Grass Yellow

It is a very common gardening plant in the parks because it blooms bunches of eye-catching yellow flowers. It is also a nectar plant that is attractive to butterflies.



肖梵天花



Rose Mallow



Urena lobata

Jul – Feb

Jul – Feb

Long-banded Silverline

It has small pink flowers which are as graceful as peach blossoms. Its fruits can be spread out by sticking to the fur of animals because the fruits are covered by hooked spines. It is a nectar plant that attracts butterflies.

D. Butterfly Paradise (lower course)

Butterfly Paradise (lower course) is planted with a large amount of host and nectar plants for butterflies.



洋金鳳

🌸 Jan – Dec

🍇 Jan – Dec



Parado Spride

The leaves of parado spride are feather liked. Its flowers are yellow at the edges and red inside. The shape of the flowers looks like a phoenix that stretches its wings.



Caesalpinia pulcherrima



柑橘

🌸 Apr – May

🍇 Oct – Dec



Swallowtail,
Common Mormon



Mandarine



Citrus reticulata

It is known as an important edible fruit. It is a host plant for many swallowtail larvae, and it is attractive to butterflies when it blooms, so it is often planted in butterfly gardens.



吊裙草



Retuse-leaved Crotalaria



Crotalaria retusa

🌸 Jan – Dec

🦋 Jan – Dec

🌿 Long-tailed Blue

It has large heart-shaped leaves, and its red flowers are also large and eye-catching. It is a nectar plant that can attract butterflies.



假鷹爪



Desmos



Desmos chinensis

🌸 Mar – Jul

🦋 Oct – Nov

🌿 Common Jay, Tailed Jay

The pedals of its flowers look like the claws of a raptor. It is a host plant for some butterfly larvae.



假連翹



Golden Dewdrops



Duranta erecta

🌸 May – Oct

🦋 May – Oct

🌿

The purple flowers and orange-yellow fruits are of great ornamental value. As a nectar plant, it is also attractive to butterflies.



香港大沙葉



HongKong Pavetta



Pavetta hongkongensis

🌸 Mar – Oct

🦋 Jun – Dec



Its flowers have four white petals, and nodules on the leaves can be seen under the sun. It is a nectar plant that is attractive to butterflies.



使君子



Rangoon Creeper



Quisqualis indica

🌸 Jun

🦋 Nov

🌿 (N) (H) Brown Awl

The five-petaled red flowers droop after blooming and are very fragrant. It is a kind of nectar plant.



翅莢決明



Winged Cassia



Senna alata

🌸 Nov – Jan

🦋 Jan – Feb

🌿 (N) (H) Lemon Emigrant,
Three-spot Grass Yellow

It is a very common gardening plant in the parks because it blooms bunches of eye-catching yellow flowers. It is also a nectar plant that is attractive to butterflies.



假馬鞭



Jamaica Vervain



Stachytarpheta jamaicensis

🌸 Aug

🍇 Sep – Oct

Ⓝ

It is also known as “long spike shrub” because of its long and stringy spike. Apart from this, it has jagged leaves, and the shape of the leaves is like a crumpled paper. It blooms purplish blue flowers which are attractive to a variety of butterflies.



珊瑚樹



Sweet Viburnum



Viburnum odoratissimum

🌸 Mar – Apr

🍇 May – Sep

Ⓝ

Ⓜ

Chocolate Royal, Red-base Jezebel

Numerous and dense white little flowers can be found when it blooms, and it bears clusters of red fruits which are very eye-catching. It is a host plant for some butterfly larvae, including red-base Jezebel which is a very common butterfly species in Hong Kong.

E. Butterfly Garden (upper course)

Butterfly Garden (upper course) is planted with a large amount of host and nectar plants for butterflies. There are also interpretive signs for visitors to learn more about butterflies.



苧麻

Ramie

Boehmeria nivea

🌸 May – Aug

🌿 Sep – Oct

🕒 Common Jester, Yellow Coster

The underside of the leaves of ramie are covered by soft white hairs and the edge of the leaves is jagged. It is a host plant for several butterfly larvae. It is also an important fiber crop which can be used to produce linen.



赧桐

Pagoda Flower

Clerodendrum japonicum

🌸 May – Nov

🌿 May – Nov

🕒

It has large heart-shaped leaves, and its red flowers are also large and eye-catching. It is a nectar plant that can attract butterflies.



薑黃

英文名：N/A

Curcuma longa

🌸 Aug

🍷 N/A

🍷 Grass Demon

It has very large leaves. The flowers of *Curcuma longa* are cylindrical. Although the white bracts at the upper half of the plant are particularly conspicuous, the yellow flowers that are pocket-shaped at the lower half of the plant are the actual flowers.



假連翹

Golden Dewdrops

Duranta erecta

🌸 May – Oct

🍷 May – Oct

🍷

The purple flowers and orange-yellow fruits are of great ornamental value. As a nectar plant, it is also attractive to butterflies.



可愛花

Blue Eranthemum

Eranthemum pulchellum

🌸 Oct – Feb

🍷 N/A

🍷 🍷 Lemon Pansy,
Common Spotted Flat

It has purplish blue flowers. It is attractive to butterflies when it blooms.



長隔木



Scarlet Bush



Hamelia patens

🌸 May – Sep

🍷 N/A

Ⓝ

The flowers are red and cylindrical in shape. It is a nectar plant that can attract butterflies to visit.



紅花酢漿草



Lavender Sorrel

Oxalis debilis

🌸 Mar – Dec

🍷 N/A

Ⓝ Ⓜ Pale Grass Blue

It is native to South America and is introduced to Hong Kong as an ornamental plant. It is now very common in Hong Kong. When it blooms, it provides nectar for animals like butterflies.

F. Butterfly Garden (lower course)

Similar to the Butterfly Garden (upper course), this place is also planted with a large amount of host and nectar plants for butterflies. There are also interpretive signs for visitors to learn more about butterflies. Name cards for some plants are also installed to help visitors identify the plants more easily.



印度馬兜鈴



India Birthwort



Aristolochia tagala

🌸 May – Aug

🦋 Oct – Dec

📍 Common Birdwing,
Golden Birdwing, Common Rose

It is a protected native plant in Hong Kong that contains aristolochic acid which is toxic in humans. It is also a host plant for a variety of swallowtail larvae (including common birdwing and golden birdwing which are protected under the laws).



馬利筋



Blood-flower



Asclepias curassavica

🌸 Jan – Dec

🦋 N/A

📍 Glassy Tiger,
Blue Tiger, Plain Tiger

Although the whole plant is poisonous, it is still a host plant for many butterfly larvae, such as some tigers and crow butterflies. Its red and yellow flowers are bloomed all year round and are very attractive to butterflies.



柑橘



Mandarine



Citrus reticulata

🌸 Apr – May

🌿 Oct – Dec

Ⓝ Ⓜ Swallowtail,
Common Mormon

It is known as an important edible fruit. It is a host plant for many swallowtail larvae, and it is attractive to butterflies when it blooms, so it is often planted in butterfly gardens.



赧桐



Pagoda Flower



Clerodendrum japonicum

🌸 May – Nov

🌿 May – Nov

Ⓝ

It has large heart-shaped leaves, and its red flowers are also large and eye-catching. It is a nectar plant that can attract butterflies.



假鷹爪



Desmos



Desmos chinensis

🌸 Mar – Jul

🌿 Oct – Nov

Ⓜ Common Jay, Tailed Jay

The pedals of its flowers look like the claws of a raptor. It is a host plant for some butterfly larvae.



假連翹

Golden Dewdrops

Duranta erecta

✿ May – Oct

🍷 May – Oct

(N)

The purple flowers and orange-yellow fruits are of great ornamental value. As a nectar plant, it is also attractive to butterflies.



長隔木

Scarlet Bush

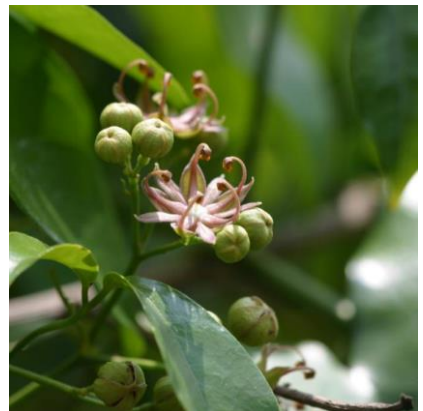
Hamelia patens

✿ May – Sep

🍷 N/A

(N)

The flowers are red and cylindrical in shape. It is a nectar plant that can attract butterflies to visit.



寬藥青藤

Illigera

Illigera celebica

✿ Apr – Oct

🍷 Jun – Nov

(H) White Dragontail

It is a protected plant and host plant for the larvae of white dragontail.



馬纓丹

Lantana

Lantana camara

🌸 Jan – Dec

🌿 Jan – Dec

🌿 (N) (H) Tiny Grass Blue

It blooms all year round. It has jagged leaves with obvious venation. Since its flowers are beautiful and attractive to butterflies, it is often planted in butterfly gardens.



含笑

Banana Shrub

Michelia figo

🌸 Mar – May

🌿 Jul – Aug

🌿 (H) Common Jay, Tailed Jay

It belongs to the family of Magnoliaceae and is also a host plant for larvae of common jay and tailed jay. It receives its common name because its flowers smell like ripe bananas.



紅花酢漿草

Lavender Sorrel

Oxalis debilis

🌸 Mar – Dec

🌿 N/A

🌿 (N) (H) Pale Grass Blue

It is native to South America and is introduced to Hong Kong as an ornamental plant. It is now very common in Hong Kong. When it blooms, it provides nectar for animals like butterflies.



棕竹

Lady Palm

Rhaps excelsa

🌸 Jun – Sep

🍷 N/A

📍 Indian Palm Bob

It is a host plant for some larvae of skipper butterflies.



鏽毛莓

Rusty-haired Raspberry

Rubus reflexus

🌸 Apr – Jul

🍷 Aug – Sep

📍 Magpie Flat, Broad Spark

It receives its common name because its branches and underside of its leaves are covered with rusty hairs. It is a host plant for some butterfly larvae.



黃荊

Yellow Bramble

Vitex negundo

🌸 Apr – Jun

🍷 Sep – Oct

📍

Small purplish flowers are bloomed in summer which can attract a variety of butterflies.

Reference

Books

楊建業、饒戈與丘紹文 (2007) 。《香港蝴蝶圖誌 (卷一) 、 (卷二) 、 (卷三) 、 (卷四) 》。香港：香港鱗翅目學會。

羅益奎與許永亮 (2010) 。《郊野情報蝴蝶篇 (第三版) 》。香港：漁農自然護理署。

Websites

HOSTS - a Database of the World's Lepidopteran Hostplants

<https://www.nhm.ac.uk/our-science/data/hostplants/search/index.dsmi>

Hong Kong Biodiversity Information Hub

<https://bih.gov.hk/en/home/index.html>

Hong Kong Herbarium

<https://www.herbarium.gov.hk/en/home/index.html>