



Identify 100 Species - Butterflies

10 species you are likely to find in Leicestershire and Rutland

How easy is it to identify?

Easy



Care needed



Target species

Small Tortoiseshell - *Aglais urticae*



ID: Orange and black with blue edge dots.

Similar species: None.

Where to look: Anywhere. Breeds on nettles and over-winters as an adult so can appear very early in the year, but the main season is April- Sept.

About: Hibernation sites can be outbuildings. Natural sites include hollow trees and woodpiles. Usually has 2 breeding generations each year.

Recording: Photo preferred. Can record from caterpillars.



Red Admiral - *Vanessa atalanta*



ID: Black uppers with red bands and white spots.

Similar species: None.

Where to look: Anywhere. Breeds on nettles. Numbers boosted in Summer by migrants.

About: There is a single brood each year. Migrant visitors also breed and adult numbers peak from mid-August to early October.

Recording: Photo preferred. Can record from caterpillars.



Speckled Wood - *Pararge aegeria*



ID: Brown with white speckles, row of eye-spots on lower wings.

Similar species: None.

Where to look: Woodland, hedgerows. April – October.

About: Populations in the north of the UK have white spots whilst those in the south have orange spots – an adaptation to climate.

Recording: Photo preferred.



Other common Leicestershire butterflies to check out:

Comma, Painted Lady, Meadow Brown, Ringlet, Common Blue, Small Skipper, Large White, Small White

Green-veined White - *Pieris napi*



ID: White with black wing tips and green veining on the under-wings. The underwings are hard to see in flight so wait for the butterfly to rest.

Similar species: Small & Large White (both lack green veins).

Where to look: Gardens, parks – anywhere with nectar! Apr-August.

About: The green veins are actually an illusion as they are in fact made up of yellow and black scales.

Recording: Photo required.



To find out more about the [100 Species Challenge](#), how to submit records of your sightings and lots more about the wildlife of Leicestershire and Rutland, visit www.naturespot.org.uk.

Gatekeeper - *Pyronia tithonus* ●

ID: Orange patches on both upper and lower wings. Two white 'pupils' in each black eye-spot.

Similar species: [Meadow Brown](#) (orange on upper wing only).

Where to look: Meadows, hedgerows. July-August.

About: Males have distinctive sex brands on the forewings - dark smudgy patches on the orange upperwings- as shown in the image right. Caterpillars feed on various meadow grasses.

Recording: Photo required.



Peacock - *Aglais io* ●

ID: Red and black with unmistakable eye-spots.

Similar species: None.

Where to look: Anywhere. Breeds on nettles and over-winters as an adult, sometimes in out-buildings.

About: The eye spots have evolved as a defense mechanism. The dark underwings help with camouflage but if disturbed it flashes the 'eyes' to startle!

Recording: Photo preferred. Can record from caterpillars.



Orange-tip - *Anthocharis cardamines* ●

ID: White on both upper and lower wings. Males with orange tips, females with light grey tips. Rounded wings.

Similar species: Females - other Whites (pointed wings).

Where to look: Meadows, often near water, hedges, wood margins, gardens.

About: The main larval foodplants are Cuckooflower and Garlic Mustard. It overwinters as a pupa and emerges in April and is gone by the end of June.

Recording: Photo required for females.



Brimstone - *Gonepteryx rhamni* ●

ID: Males are lemon yellow, females much paler.

Similar species: None.

Where to look: Gardens, parks, hedges. With closed wings they resemble a dead leaf and overwinter in Ivy and other plants emerging in early Spring.

About: The distribution of this species closely follows that of the larval food plants Buckthorn and Alder Buckthorn. For this reason the species is rarely seen in parts of Wales, northern England and Scotland.

Recording: Photo preferred.



Holly Blue - *Celastrina argiolus* ●

ID: Small with blue upper-wings (female with black borders) and with silvery, black-spotted under-wings. Best identified when resting.

Similar species: The under-wings are unmistakable.

Where to look: Gardens, parks, woodland edges. Breeds in 2 generations, first on Holly then on Ivy. April – Sept.

About: Population numbers fluctuate, believed to be caused by parasitism from the wasp *Listrodomus nyctemerus* whose sole host is the Holly Blue.

Recording: Photo required.



Large Skipper - *Ochlodes sylvanus* ●

ID: Small and moth-like. Orange with black marks on the upper-wings.

Similar species: [Small Skipper](#) (lacks black markings)

Where to look: Meadow grassland. June – August.

About: There is one generation each year and the species forms discrete colonies. The main larval foodplant is the grass Cock's-foot (*Dactylis glomerata*) but other grasses are used.

Recording: Photo required.

