

Butterflies



Small Tortoiseshell 50-55mm. This is a very common butterfly which regularly frequents gardens, particularly favouring Buddlea bushes. It is mainly reddish-orange with black markings and blue spots around the border. In contrast, the underside is quite dull. It can be found sometimes hibernating in houses. You can see it from April to September.

Painted Lady 65-70mm. This migrant butterfly is somewhat like a dull version of the Small Tortoiseshell. It is predominantly a dull orange with black markings and has a very colourful red, black and white underside. They do not survive the winter here. You can see it from June to September.



Red Admiral 65-70mm. This rather large migrant is mainly dark brown with bright red stripes. The underside has colourful patterns. It is attracted to gardens where it feeds on buddlea, several other flowering species and also over-ripe fruit. You can see it from May to September.

Dark Green Fritillary 60-70mm. The wing pattern is similar to that of the silver but the underside has spots rather than streaks. This fast flier is rather uncommon in Ireland, mainly restricted to coastal regions. You can see it from mid-june to August.



Common Blue 30-35mm. The Common Blue is the most colourful of the Blues found in Ireland. The male is a very attractive shiny blue, whereas the female is mainly brown. The underside is very decorative with orange crescents and black spots. You can see it from May to September.

Green Hairstreak 28-34mm. The Green Hairstreak has a very attractive metallic green underside. The upper side is brown but at rest the butterfly always keeps its wings closed. It is quite small and difficult to see as it is well camouflaged among the green leaves of gorse and other shrubs. You can see it from April to September.



Small Copper 26-32mm. The Small Copper is fairly common in Ireland. It is a fast flyer that will occasionally visit gardens but is usually found in fields, hedgerows and woodland edges. It has shiny copper wings with black dashes. Some specimens have small blue dots on the wings close to the body. You can see it from April to August.

Speckled Wood 47-50mm. This is a very common species of woodland and shady hedgerows. It has dark brown wings with a creamy spotted pattern. It is very territorial, fighting off intruding butterflies and other insects. It has a long flying season and can be seen flying even in dull weather. You can see it from April to September.



Meadow Brown 50-55mm. This is a common species that can be seen in very large numbers in suitable habitats. It is predominantly brown, with one large eyespot on each forewing. The female is larger and brighter with a bright orange patch around the eyespot. Like the Speckled Wood, this species can also be seen flying in dull weather. You can see it from June to August.

Wall Brown 44-46mm. This butterfly is easily disturbed if you try to approach it as it basks in the sunshine (often on rocks or stone walls). It is mainly brown/orange with a darker brown pattern and several eyespots. The underside is grey with an elaborate design including eyespot. You can see it from May to August.



Grayling 56-61mm. This butterfly is a master of camouflage. When at rest, it keeps its wings closed with the forewing tucked in. Furthermore, it positions itself to cast a minimum shadow. If disturbed, it probably will not travel far but is still difficult to track as it will be virtually invisible when it lands. You can see it from June to September.

Small Heath 33-37mm. This is the smallest of the Browns and is predominantly orange/light brown in colour when seen in flight. At rest, its wings remain closed, showing the grey/brown underside. It is easily disturbed, though its flight is weak, making it easy to track. It has a single eyespot on each wing. You can see it from April to August.

