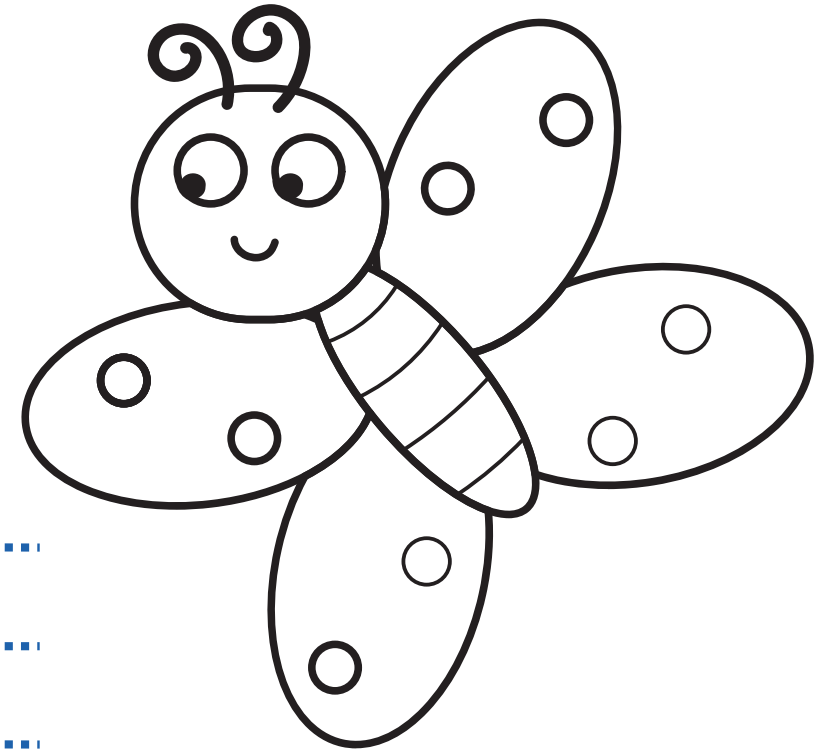


SPECIES
on the EDGE
Gnèithean air an Oir

Small Blue Butterflies in Caithness

Student Workbook



Name:

Age:

School:



Small Blue Butterflies in Caithness

True or false?

1. Caithness is the only place in the world where Small Blue butterflies live.

TRUE/FALSE

.....

.....

2. Small Blue butterflies are the smallest butterfly in Britain.

TRUE/FALSE

.....

.....

3. Small Blue butterflies always live near Kidney Vetch plants.

TRUE/FALSE

.....

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4. Small Blue caterpillars sometimes eat each other.

TRUE/FALSE

.....

.....

5. Small Blue butterflies leave blue slime on Kidney Vetch flowers where they have laid their eggs.

TRUE/FALSE

.....

.....

6. Small Blue caterpillars live on tree tops or high buildings over winter to avoid frost and snow.

TRUE/FALSE

.....

.....

7. In Caithness, Small Blue butterflies can be seen flying from April until September.

TRUE/FALSE

.....

.....

8. It is important that volunteers go out to count Small Blue butterflies every year.

TRUE/FALSE

.....

.....

9. Caithness has a Kidney Vetch community growing project to help create more homes for Small Blue butterflies.

TRUE/FALSE

.....

.....

10. Small Blue butterflies are bright blue all over.

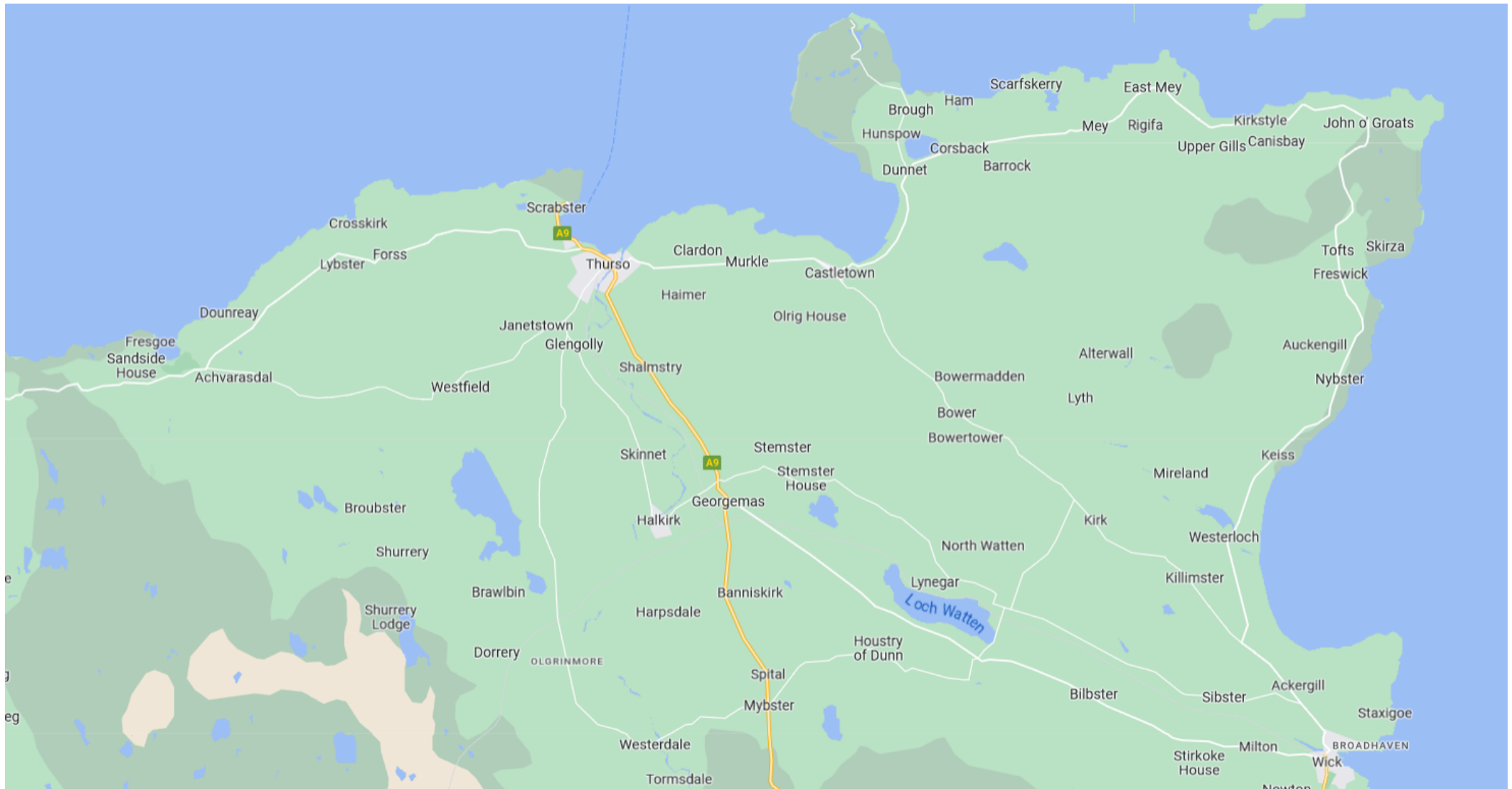
TRUE/FALSE

.....

.....

The Caithness colonies

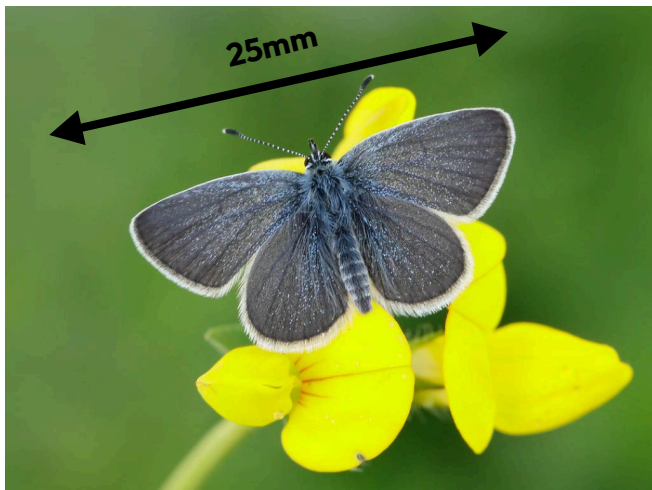
Mark on the map where the three known colonies of Small Blue butterflies in Caithness are.



Spot the difference

Small Blue butterflies are often confused with Common Blue butterflies.
How many differences can you find?

Small Blue



What differences can you see?

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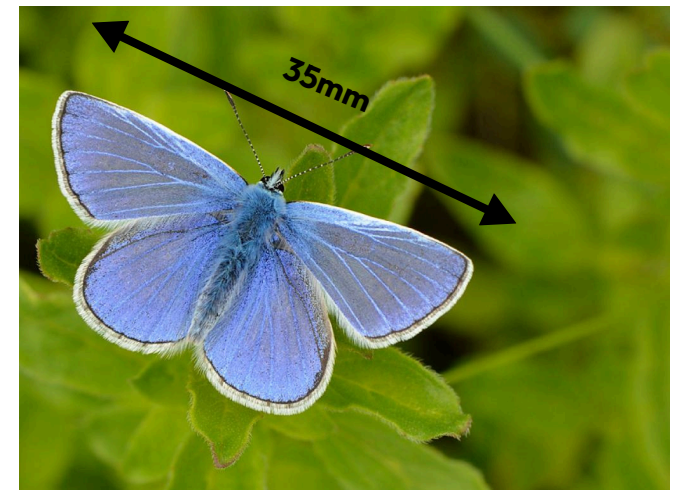
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Common Blue



Life cycle of a Small Blue butterfly

Use the words below to fill in the blanks - but be careful! There are four trick words!

dragonfly
Kidney Vetch
one
three
daffodil
soil
chrysalis
December
butterfly
May or June
female
fifty

Adult

In Scotland, butterflies emerge in _____. Males sit on grass waiting for a _____ to fly by to mate with.

Egg

In June, eggs are laid in _____ flowers. The caterpillars eat each other so only _____ can survive on a single flower head.

Caterpillar

Eggs hatch after one to _____ weeks. When fully grown the caterpillars crawl to the ground and pass the winter in the _____ or under moss.

Pupa

In late April or May, the caterpillar enters the pupa stage, also known as the _____ stage. Here, it breaks down its body and transforms into a _____.

SPECIES on the EDGE

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The north coast of Scotland is home to some of Scotland's most vulnerable species.

We're working together for nature on Scotland's coasts and islands.

Find out more about our work:

plantlife.org.uk
@plantlife.loveplants
speciesontheedge.co.uk
@SpecieSEdge



Make a butterfly

Did you know?

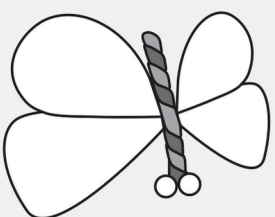
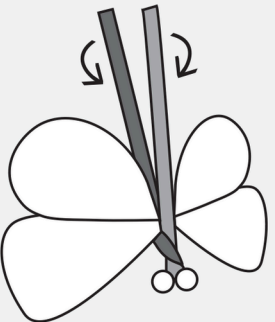
Butterflies have their skeletons on the outside of their bodies and it's called the exoskeleton.

Many butterflies can taste with their feet to find out whether the leaf they sit on is good enough to lay their eggs on.

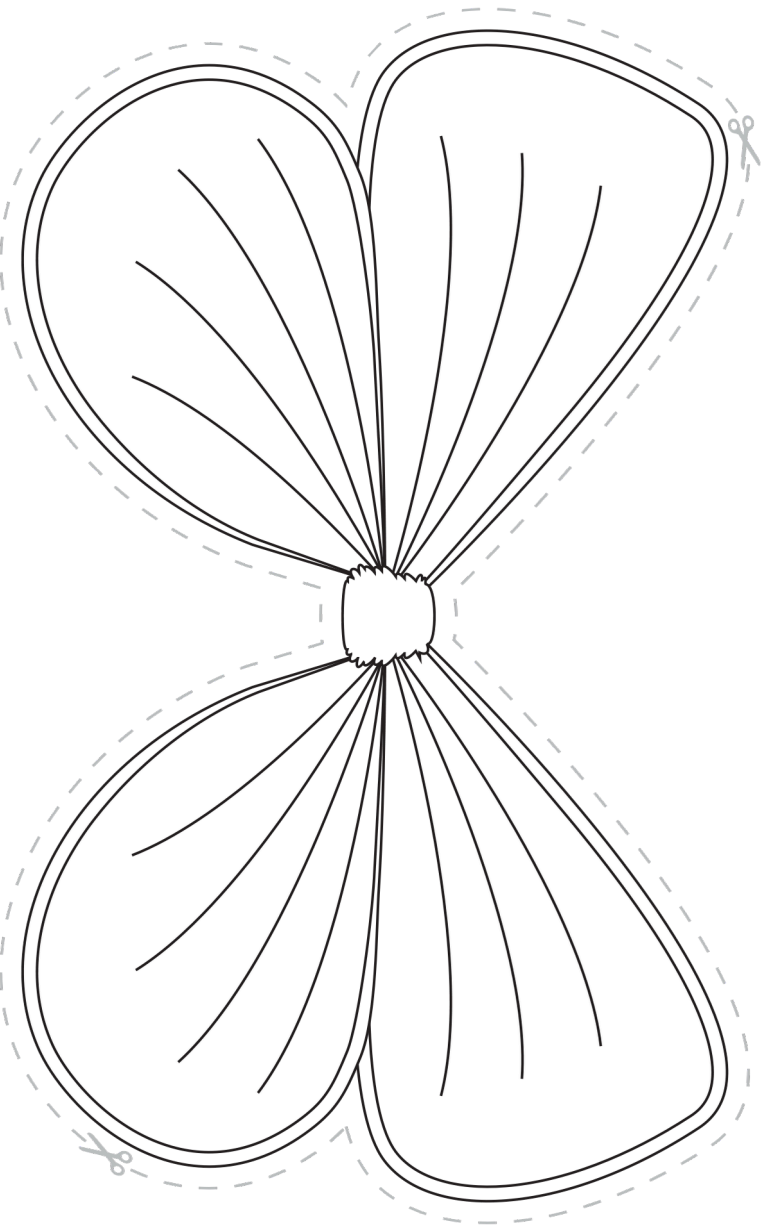
Britain has 59 butterfly species and around 6 species that visit us from abroad to breed.

What to do:

1. Colour in the wings and then carefully cut them out.
2. Fold a pipe cleaner in half and thread one bead onto each end, so that the beads are either side of the fold.

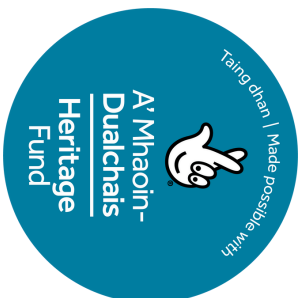


3. Twist the pipe cleaner ends around each other several times and then place the wings in between.
4. Continue twisting the ends to hold the wings in place and form the butterfly's body.
5. Carefully cut the pipe cleaners shorter to look like a butterfly body but make sure to fold the sharp metal ends of the pipe cleaner underneath so they can't scratch anyone.



SPECIES On the EDGE

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Today participated in a workshop delivered by Caithness Environment Volunteers and Species on the Edge about Small Blue butterflies, the UK's smallest butterfly.

Small Blue butterflies need urgent conservation action as their numbers continue to decline. Caithness is home to just three colonies of Small Blue butterfly: Scrabster, Castlehill and Dunnet. These colonies are very isolated and at the very edge of the Small Blue's range. Everything we can do to help them could make a difference.

Luckily, in Caithness some amazing work is taking place to protect Small Blue butterflies and it's easy to get involved. Here are a few ways you can help:

- Grow your interest in the butterfly by going on a visit to see the butterfly bank at Dunnet Community Forest. Small Blues are on the wing from late May until early July; if you visit during calm, sunny weather, you may be lucky enough to see one!
- If you have a few hours to spare twice a month during June, you could volunteer to carry out timed counts of Small Blue butterflies; full training will be provided. Contact sarah.bird@plantlife.org.uk to register your interest.
- If you have a garden or window box, you can grow Kidney Vetch, the sole food source of the Small Blue caterpillar. You can collect locally sourced Kidney Vetch seed from Thurso Grows community garden.
- Perhaps you are part of a club or group that would like to know more about Small Blue butterflies. Get in touch with the team at Species on the Edge to arrange for a talk, workshop or presentation for your group. Contact louise.senior@plantlife.org.uk for more information.
- Like 'Caithness Environment Volunteers' and 'Species on the Edge' on Facebook to stay up-to-date with our work on Small Blue butterflies.
- Check out the Species on the Edge website for more information about the work we're doing to protect 37 species across Scotland's coasts and islands: speciesontheedge.co.uk

Finally, we'd love you to share your learning by telling everyone what colour Small Blue butterflies are: people might be surprised at the answer!*

If you'd like any more information about Small Blue butterflies in Caithness, or the Species on the Edge programme of activities across the north coast, please contact Louise Senior, People Engagement Officer: louise.senior@plantlife.org.uk
Good luck butterfly hunting!

*Small Blue butterflies are not very blue at all! If you've seen a butterfly that is small and blue, it is probably a Common Blue butterfly. Despite its name, the male Small Blue butterfly only has a small dusting of blue near to its body; otherwise, it is a dusky dark grey-brown with pale, silver-grey underwings. The female is similar, but without the blue markings on the upper wings.