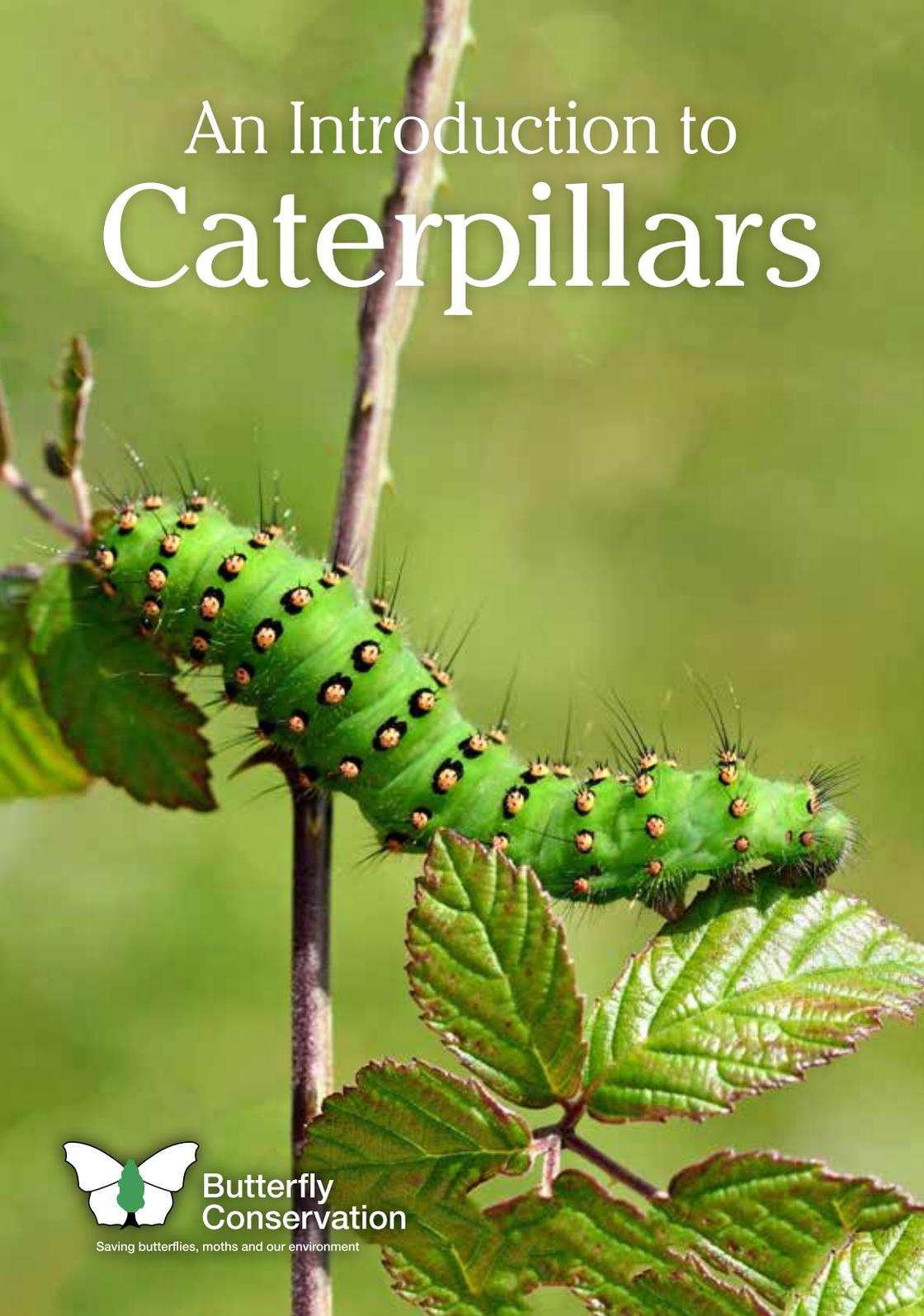


# An Introduction to Caterpillars



**Butterfly  
Conservation**

Saving butterflies, moths and our environment



*Oak Eggar*  
All year-round

**TIP:**  
Many species look alike as caterpillars. If you can identify their food source you will find it easier to work out which butterfly or moth it will become.

# Introduction to Caterpillars

All butterflies and moths spend part of their life cycle as a caterpillar. Some pupate after just a few weeks while others spend all winter curled up in their caterpillar form.

Lepidoptera lay their eggs on or close to the food source for their caterpillar, to maximise their chance of survival once they hatch. To address moth and butterfly declines we must provide habitat that offers food and shelter for the caterpillars of struggling species. As a caterpillar grows it sheds its skin

several times, sometimes changing colour or appearance as it does so. Caterpillars often use their looks to protect themselves from predators. Their markings and body shape can camouflage them, warn of unpleasant chemicals or even mimic more dangerous creatures.

Combine butterflies and moths and there are more than 2,600 different types of caterpillar to be found in the UK. Here are a few of the most frequently encountered.

Visit [www.butterfly-conservation.org](http://www.butterfly-conservation.org) to discover more about these species and their foodplants.



*Comma butterfly*  
Apr-early Sep



*Large White butterfly*  
May-Oct



*Sycamore*  
Jul-Sep



*Cinnabar*  
Jul-early Sep



*Angle Shades*  
All year-round



*Elephant Hawk-moth*  
Jun-Sep



*Drinker*  
Aug-Jun



*Fox Moth*  
Jul-Apr



*Broom Moth*  
late Jul-early Oct



*Garden Tiger*  
Aug-late Jun



*Vapourer*  
May-early Sep



*Knot Grass*  
Jun-Oct

# Sign Up Today

Subscribe to our monthly email newsletter to learn where to look for and how to identify butterflies, moths and their caterpillars, discover how to help butterflies in your garden and get more information about how Butterfly Conservation saves endangered species. Sign up to All Aflutter at [www.butterfly-conservation.org/enews](http://www.butterfly-conservation.org/enews)

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