

Lough Carra's YOUNG EXPLORERS



BUTTERFLIES of Lough Carra



Funded by
An Chomhairle Oidhreachta
The Heritage Council



BUTTERFLIES ARE HEAVILY DEPENDENT ON HIGH-QUALITY HABITAT. THEY ARE INDICATORS OF HOW HEALTHY OUR ENVIRONMENT IS. A HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT FOR BUTTERFLIES MEANS A HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT FOR PEOPLE. AREAS RICH IN BUTTERFLIES AND MOTHS ARE ALWAYS RICH IN OTHER INSECTS TOO. BUTTERFLIES NEED A SOURCE OF FOOD FOR THEIR CATERPILLARS, USUALLY THE LEAVES OF A PLANT, AND FOOD FOR THE ADULT IN THE FORM OF NECTAR.

THERE ARE 25 BUTTERFLY SPECIES THAT OCCUR AROUND LOUGH CARRA. THIS IS QUITE A HIGH PROPORTION OF IRELAND'S TOTAL SPECIES LIST OF 35 (32 RESIDENT AND 3 MIGRANT). THE MAIN REASONS ARE THAT THERE IS A WIDE VARIETY OF HABITATS AND QUITE A FEW REMAIN RELATIVELY UNDISTURBED AND CONTAIN NATIVE FLORA.

BUTTERFLIES GO THROUGH FOUR DIFFERENT STAGES IN THEIR LIFE 1) EGG 2) CATERPILLAR 3) CHRYSALIS 4) ADULT. MOST BUTTERFLIES TAKE A WHOLE YEAR TO GO FROM EGG TO FLYING ADULT BUTTERFLY.

TO HAVE THE BEAUTIFUL FLYING BUTTERFLIES WE MUST HAVE THE PLANTS WHERE EGGS CAN BE LAID AND EACH BUTTERFLY SPECIES HAS ITS OWN EGG LAYING PLANT PREFERENCE. SOME BUTTERFLIES, LIKE THE MARSH FRITILLARY, ARE EXTREMELY CHOOSY AND LAY THEIR EGGS ON ONE PARTICULAR PLANT.

THE CATERPILLARS EMERGE FROM THE EGG AND FEED ON SPECIFIC FOOD PLANTS. FOR EXAMPLE, PEACOCK AND SMALL TORTOISESHELL CATERPILLARS LOVE TO FEED ON NETTLES.

WHEN THE ADULT 'FLYING' BUTTERFLIES EMERGE FROM THE CHRYSALIS THEY FLY AROUND LOOKING FOR PLANTS WITH VALUABLE NECTAR TO FEED ON TO GIVE THEM ENERGY TO FLY. THEIR DIET IS AN ALL-LIQUID DIET OF NECTAR. THE ADULT BUTTERFLIES CAN BE DISTINGUISHED FROM DAY-FLYING MOTHS BECAUSE THEY HAVE A THICKENED END TO THEIR ANTENNAE, GIVING THEM A SLIGHTLY CLUBBED APPEARANCE. MOTHS DO NOT HAVE CLUBBED ANTENNAE.

BUTTERFLIES ARE VALUABLE POLLINATORS FOR OUR WILDFLOWERS AND GARDEN PLANTS, INCLUDING FRUIT AND VEGETABLE PLANTS. NEARLY 75% OF FOOD CROPS WORLDWIDE DEPEND ON POLLINATOR INSECTS LIKE BUTTERFLIES.

THE BUTTERFLIES AND THEIR CATERPILLARS ARE AN IMPORTANT FOOD SOURCE FOR INSECT-EATING BIRD SPECIES, FOR EXAMPLE TITS, WAGTAILS, DUNNOCKS, ROBINS ETC.

MANY SPECIES OF BUTTERFLIES AND OTHER INSECTS HAVE DECLINED ALARMINGLY IN RECENT YEARS BECAUSE OF USE OF PESTICIDES AND THE LOSS OF NATURAL GRASSLANDS AND NATIVE PLANTS - PLACES TO LAY EGGS AND FEED. IT'S VITALLY IMPORTANT WE PRESERVE NATURAL AREAS AND CREATE NEW ONES.



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LEARN MORE ABOUT THE BUTTERFLIES OF LOUGH CARRA

1

PEACOCK



2

**PURPLE
HAIRSTREAK**



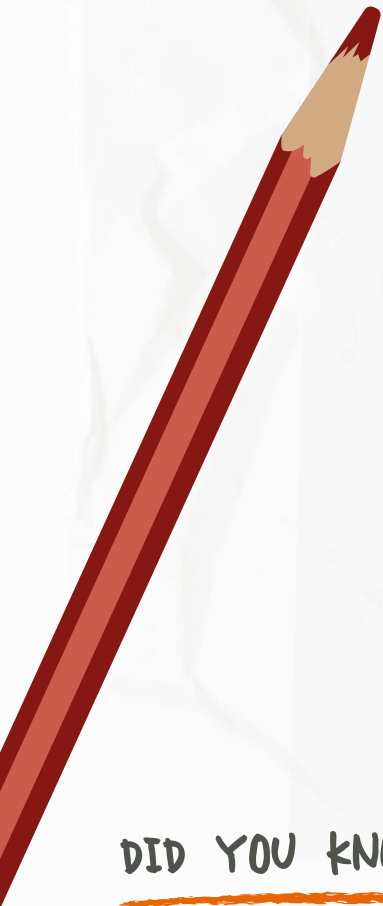
3

**MARSH
FRITILLARY**



PEACOCK

(IRISH NAME : PÉACÓG)



DID YOU KNOW

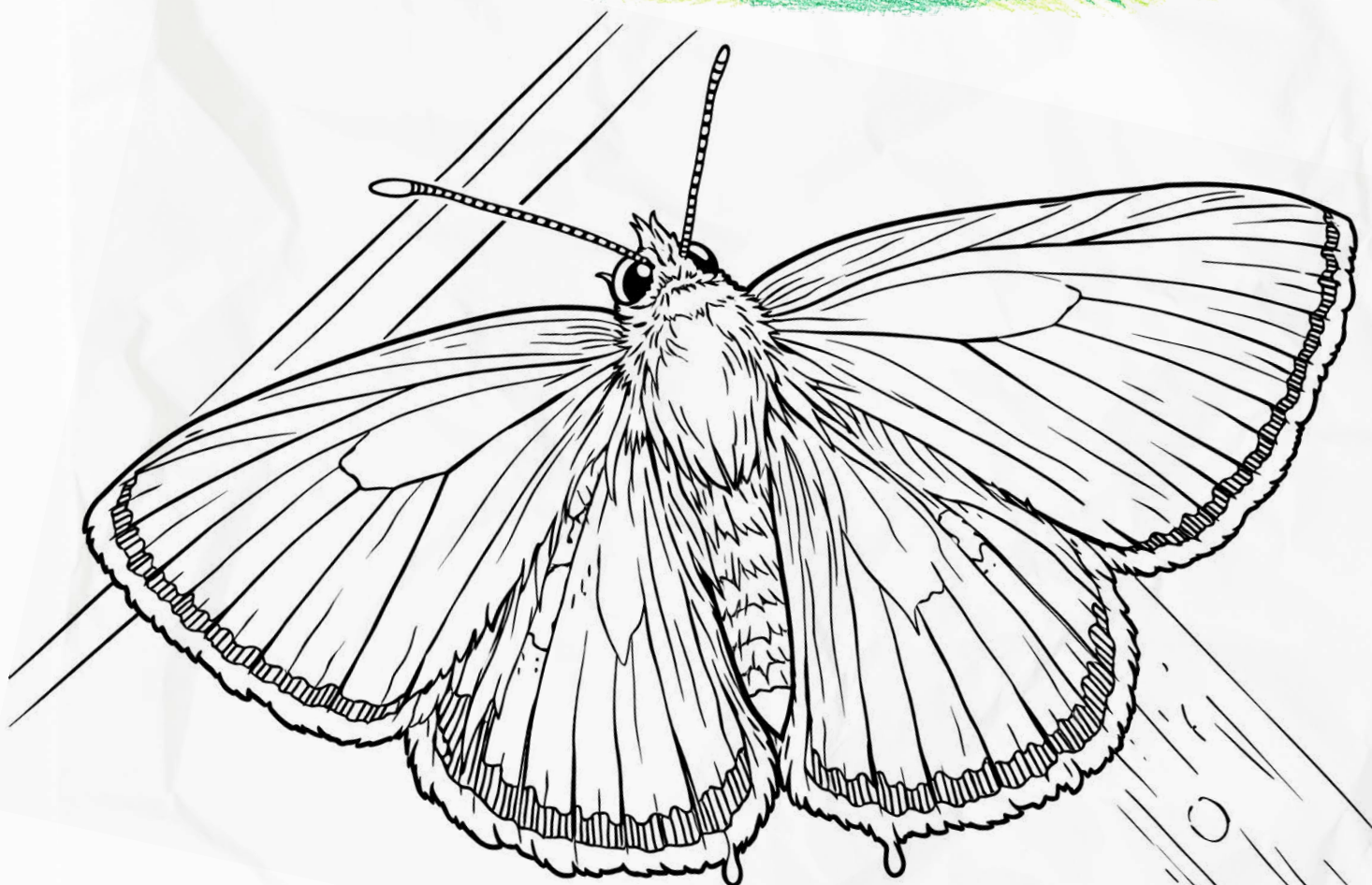
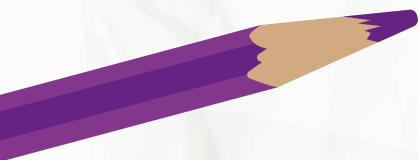
PEACOCK BUTTERFLIES CAN BE FOUND IN GARDENS, WOODLANDS AND HEDGEROWS. THE COLOURFUL MARKINGS ON THEIR WINGS LOOK LIKE EYES. THEY LAY THEIR EGGS ON NETTLES WHICH ARE AN IMPORTANT FOOD SOURCE FOR CATERpillARS. THEY ARE WIDESPREAD ACROSS IRELAND.



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PURPLE HAIRSTREAK

(IRISH NAME : STIALLACH CORCRA)



DID YOU KNOW

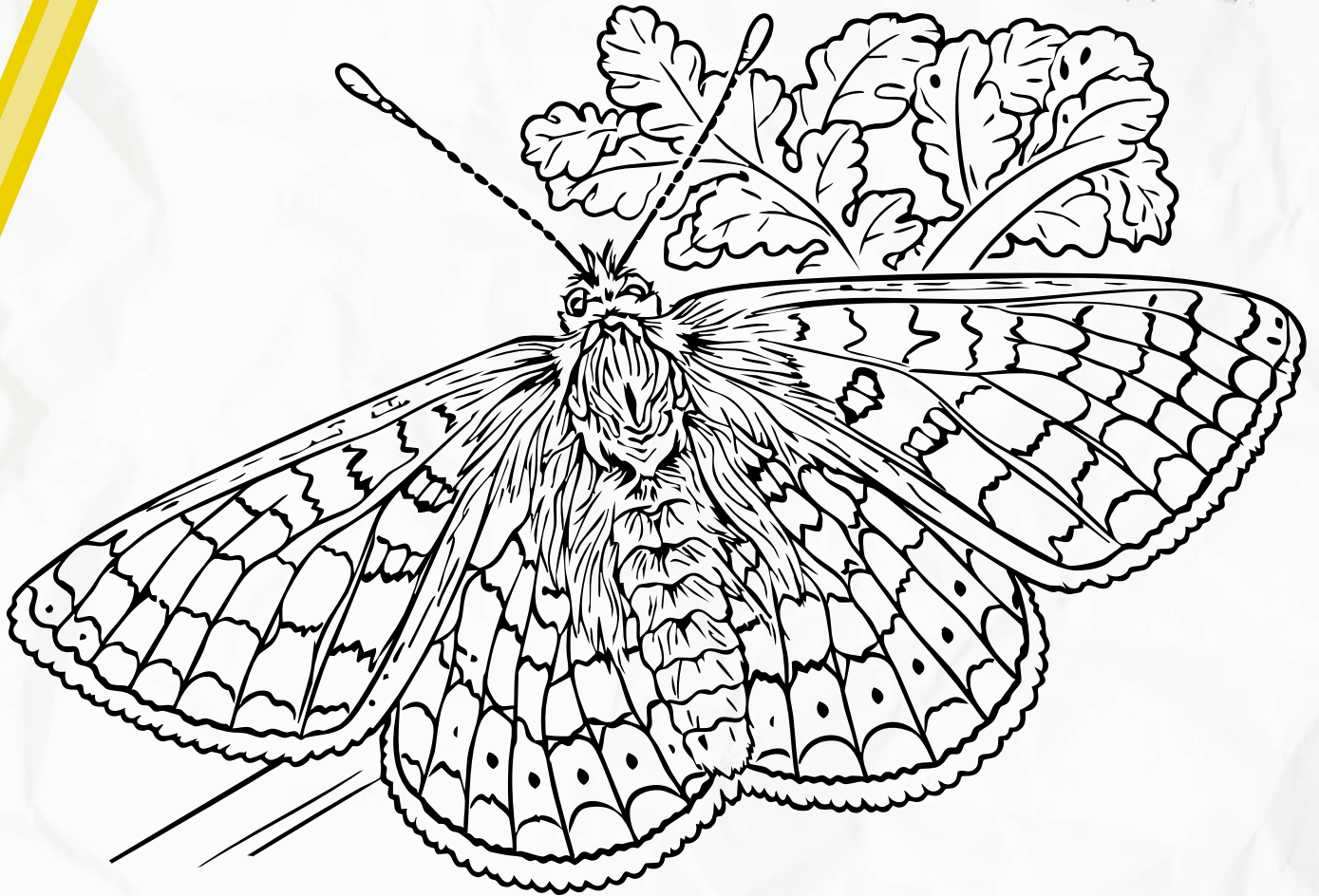
PURPLE HAIRSTREAKS ARE A VERY RARE SPECIES OF BUTTERFLY AND ONLY FOUND IN A FEW OAK WOODLANDS ACROSS IRELAND. THEY HAVE BEEN FOUND AT TWO LOCATIONS NEAR LOUGH CARRA WHERE THERE ARE LARGE OLD OAK TREES.



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MARSH FRITILLARY

(IRISH NAME : FRITILEÁN RÉISC)



DID YOU KNOW

MARSH FRITILLARY ARE COMPLETELY DEPENDENT ON THE PLANT DEVIL'S-BIT SCABIOUS. THIS IS THE ONLY FOOD SOURCE FOR THE CATERPILLAR AND SO THE BUTTERFLIES LAY THEIR EGGS ON THESE PLANTS. YOU WILL SEE MARSH FRITILLARY FLY BETWEEN MAY AND JUNE ESPECIALLY WHEN IT'S SUNNY.



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BUTTERFLIES OF LOUGH CARRA (WORD SEARCH)

M B A R I W V E Y O D N T U J E J B
E E N E W P E A C O C K Q P M G E L
N O V U L U Y U I H D V X F R E M O
V G X J C A T E R P I L L A R T G U
A A N N J B V O O A K T R E E S I G
E G G S C N E T T L E S N R T J C H
Z I Y U I G V O O Z P T L T B Y U C
F P U R P L E H A I R S T R E A K A
A B P G U D E X M J I N N Z E N M R
A L M A R S H F R I T I L L A R Y R
I E J B D T O A Q P F L G T W K A A
A S T C H S M E W O O D L A N D S C

FIND THE FOLLOWING WORDS IN THE PUZZLE.

WORDS ARE HIDDEN → AND ↓ AND ↘

PURPLE
HAIRSTREAK

MARSH
FRITILLARY

CATERPILLAR

LOUGH CARRA

WOODLANDS

OAK TREES

PEACOCK

NETTLES

EGGS



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