

Butterflies and moths at Walter Sisulu National Botanical Garden

A **diverse** array of **larval food plants** (food for the caterpillars) combined with the **availability of flowers** for nectar (food for adult butterflies) make this **Garden a good place for spotting butterflies**.

Moths, butterflies and their **caterpillars** are an **essential part of the ecosystem** of the Garden and the nature reserve. Many **birds, reptiles, mammals** and other **insects** will feed on both **caterpillars** and **adult butterflies** and **moths**.

Some caterpillars however, **feed on poisonous plants** thereby **making themselves toxic to predators!** A well-known example of this is the **African Monarch butterfly** (*Danaus chrysippus*), which eats the **poisonous milkweed plants** (*Gomphocarpus* spp.). **Some non-poisonous** butterfly species have **taken advantage** of this phenomenon and have markings which **mimic those of the Monarch**, thereby **fooling would-be predators** into **thinking** that they are **toxic!**

One of the **Garden's most familiar butterflies** is the **Garden Acraea** (*Acraea horta*) whose **larvae feed** on the **Wild Peach** (*Kigelia africana*). Interestingly, this small, usually brick red and black butterfly and their caterpillars **also absorb substances from their host plants** which make them **distasteful to most animals**. The **exceptions** are the various **cuckoo** species which **visit the Garden in summer**; they apparently **relish** the Garden Acraea! The **young caterpillars** often fall **prey to parasitic wasps**, which help to **keep their numbers in check**.

Butterfly species recorded at the Garden to date:

Information kindly supplied by the Lepidopterists' Society of Africa and Christopher Willis (SANBI)

Common name (English)	Common name (Afrikaans)	Scientific name
African Clouded Yellow	Lusernskoenlapper	<i>Colias electo</i>
African Common White	Afrikaanse gewone witjie	<i>Belenois creona</i>
African Grass Blue	Duwweltjie-bloutjie	<i>Zizeeria knysna</i>
African Leopard	Populierluiperd	<i>Phalanta phalantha</i>
African Migrant	Afrikaanse swerwer	<i>Catopsilia florella</i>
African Monarch , Plain tiger	Melkbosskoenlapper	<i>Danaus chrysippus</i>
Aranda Copper	Aranda-kopervlerkie	<i>Aloeides aranda</i>
Black Heart	Swart-hartbloutjie	<i>Uranotauma nubifer</i>
Black Pie		<i>Tuxentius melaena</i>
Black Striped Hairtail	Swartstreep-kortstertjie	<i>Anthene amarah</i>
Black-bordered Babul Blue	Doringboom-bloutjie	<i>Azanus moriqua</i>
Blue Pansy	Blou-gesiggie	<i>Junonia oenone</i>
Broad-bordered Grass Yellow	Grasveldgeletjie	<i>Eurema brigitta</i>
Brown Payboy	Bruin-spelertjie	<i>Deudorix antalus</i>
Brown-veined White	Grasveldwitjie	<i>Belenois aurota</i>
Citrus Swallowtail	Lemoenskoenlapper	<i>Papilio demodocus</i>
Common Dotted Border	Gewone voëlent-witjie	<i>Mylothris agathina</i>
Common Fig Tree Blue	Vyeboombloutjie	<i>Myrina silenus</i>
Common Geranium Bronze	Malvabloutjie	<i>Cacyreus marshalli</i>
Common Hairtail	Donker-kortstertjie	<i>Anthene definita</i>
Common Hottentot	Geel-hotnot	<i>Gegenes niso</i>
Common Meadow Blue		<i>Cupidopsis cissus cissus</i>
Common Meadow White	Bontrokkie	<i>Pontia helice</i>

Common Zebra Blue Gewone-ertjiebloutjie *Leptotes pirithous*
Cupreous Blue Koperbloutjie *Eicochrysops messapus*
Dancing Acraea *Hyalites eponina*
Dark Hottentot Swart-hotnot *Gegenes pumilio*
Dismal Sylph Donker-walsertjie *Tsitana tsita*
Dotted Blue Spikkelbloutjie *Tarucus sybaris*
Durban's Woolly Legs Durban-wolpootjie *Lachnocnema durbani*
Dusky Copper Donker-kopervlerkie *Aloeides taikosama*
Eastern Scarlet Ralie-rooivlerkie *Axiocerses tjoane*
Ella's Bar Ella-streepvlerkie *Cigaritis ella*
Eyed Pansy Padwagterjie *Junonia orithya*
Flower-girl Hopper *Platylesches neba*
Forest White Boswitjie *Belenois zochalia*
Foxy Charaxes Koppie-dubbelstert *Charaxes jasius*
Fulvous Ranger Mohozutza-wagttertjie *Kedestes mohozutza*
Garden Acraea Tuinrootjie *Acraea horta*
Garden Commodore Rotsblaarvlerk *Precis archesia*
Green-banded Swallowtail Groenlint-swaelstert *Papilio nireus*
Green-veined Emperor *Charaxes candiope*
Guinea-fowl Butterfly Tarentaaltjie *Hamanumida daedalus*
Henning's Black-eye Henning-se-swartogje *Leptomyrina henningi*
Henning's Copper Henning-se-kopervlerkie *Aloeides henningi*
Lemon Traveller Suurlemoensmous *Colotis subfasciatus*
Marsh Acraea Moeras-rootjie *Hyalites rahira*
Mocker Bronze *Cacyreus virilis*
Mimic Blouglans/Na-aper *Hypolimnas misippus*
Mozambique Bar Mosambiek-streepvlerkie *Cigaritis mozambica*
Mountain Sandman *Spialia spio*
Natal Acraea Natal-rootjie *Acraea natalica*
Natal Bar Natalse-streepvlerkie *Cigaritis natalensis*
Painted Lady Sondagsrokkie *Vanessa cardui*
Patrician Blue Patricia-bloutjie *Lepidochrysops patricia*
Pea Blue Lusern-bloutjie *Lampides boeticus*
Peppered Hopper Ayres-se-springertjie *Platylesches ayresii*
Pirate Seerower *Catacroptera cloanthe*
Purplebrown Hairstreak Persbruin-stertbloutjie *Hypolycaena philippus*
Rayed Blue Witstreep-bloutjie *Actizera lucida*
Russet Protea Sannie-se-suikerbossie *Capys disjunctus*
Sabie Smoky Blue Sabie-dowwebloutjie *Euchrysops dolorosa*
Scarce Ranger Seldsame-wagttertjie *Kedestes nerva*
Small Marbled Elf Kleinmamer-kluisenaar *Eretis umbra*
Smoky Orange Tip Donkeroranjepuntjie *Colotis euippe*
Common Sandman Gewone-sandmanneltjie *Spialia diomus*
Spotted Joker Leliëgrasvegter *Byblia ilithya*
Spotted Sailor Spikkel-swewer *Neptis saclava*
Spotted-eye Brown Koloog-bruintjie *Paternympha narycia*
Star Sandman Sterretjie-sandmanneltjie *Spialia asterodia*
Striped Policeman Witbroek-konstabel *Coeliades forestan*
Tiny Grass Blue Gaika-bloutjie *Zizula hylax*
Topaz Babul Blue Hemels-bloutjie *Azanus jesous*

Trimen's Sapphire Trimen-se-saffier *Iolous trimeni*
Twin Dotted Border Oranjevlerk voëlent-witjie *Mylothris rueppellii*
Twin-spot Blue Dubbelkol-bloutjie *Lepidochrysops plebeia*
Velvet-spotted Babul Blue Fluweelkol-bloutjie *Azanus ubaldus*
White-barred Emperor *Charaxes brutus natalensis*
Wichgraf's Hillside Brown Wichgraf-se-rantbruintjie *Stygionympha wichgrafi*
Yellow Pansy Geel-gesiggie *Junonia hierta*
Zebra White Kwagga *Pinacopteryx eriphia*
Zulu Blue Zoeloe-bloutjie *Lepidochrysops ignota*