

# Butterfly Memory Game

Discover Alaska butterflies with a memory game!



## Materials Needed:

Two copies of Butterfly Memory Cards (or draw your own), scissors.

*Optional:* Cardstock, glue.

## Prepare Your Cards:

Print the game cards. To make them sturdier, glue to cardstock. Cut out all 12 pairs (24 cards in total) along the solid lines.

## How To Play:

Lay the 24 cards face-down. Take turns flipping over two cards. If the two cards match, the player keeps the pair and goes again. If they don't match, the player leaves the cards where they are and turns them face-down again. The next player takes their turn.

Continue playing until the cards have all been matched and collected. The player with the most pairs is the winner.

To adapt the game for younger children, play with fewer pairs. Choose butterflies that look the most different from each other.

Look at the butterfly cards and discuss what you see. What kinds of colors, shapes, and sizes do you observe?

## Observe Butterflies:

There are about 80 different species of butterflies in Alaska. Keep an eye out for butterflies as the weather gets warmer! Do you recognize any of the butterflies from the game?

Right: Canadian Tiger Swallowtail (*Papilio canadensis*).



# Butterfly Memory Cards



Canadian Tiger Swallowtail  
*Papilio canadensis*



Giant Sulphur  
*Colias gigantea*



Lively Clouded Sulphur  
*Colias philodice vitabunda*



Arctic Skipper  
*Carterocephalus palaemon skada*



Northern Marble  
*Euchloe creusa*



Alaskan Blue  
*Plebejus idas alaskensis*



Compton Tortoise Shell  
*Nymphalis j-album*



White Admiral  
*Limenitis arthemis rubrofasciata*



Mourning Cloak  
*Nymphalis antiopa*



Arctic Anglewing  
*Polytonia faunus arcticus*



Denali Bog Fritillary  
*Boloria eunomia denali*



Philip's Arctic  
*Oeneis philipi*

Note: This activity shows only some of around 80 butterfly species that live in Alaska. Images are not to scale.

# Butterflies in Alaska

**Bees are not the only insects that pollinate flowers! Flies, moths, beetles, wasps, and butterflies are all important pollinators.**



Fritillary. Image: Beatriz Moisset, US Forest Service.

Because they have small bodies and thin legs, butterflies are less efficient at moving pollen than bees. However, they still pollinate many wildflowers, including salvias and sunflowers. Butterflies often visit round flowers with flared petals that lead to narrow throats that conceal nectar. Butterflies land on the wide petals, then delicately probe the flower's *nectary* (the gland that produces nectar) with their long *proboscis* (tongue).

**Did You Know?** Butterflies typically visit brightly colored flowers. They are one of the few insects able to see red! Butterflies have good vision but a weak sense of smell.

There are about 80 species of butterflies in Alaska. They have many adaptations to help survive in cold Arctic environments:

- **Overwintering:** In the winter, some butterflies will go dormant, lying inactive under the snow. Different species may overwinter at different life stages. In Alaska, six species overwinter as adults. They produce a special anti-freezing chemical that prevents ice crystals forming in their bodies.
- **Longer Life Cycles:** A caterpillar cannot grow much in a short Arctic summer, so they live for several years as larva (hibernating in the winter) until they are big enough to develop into an adult butterfly.
- **Staying Warm:** Butterflies need to absorb sunlight to stay warm. Each species has a preferred way of basking in the sun. Some spread their wings out, while others fold them at specific angles.



Mourning Cloak butterfly. Image: Wikimedia Commons.

**Discover more about Alaska butterflies:** [kenphilipcollection.alaska.edu](http://kenphilipcollection.alaska.edu)