

ISLAND BUTTERFLIES

by Kelly Murphy, West Royalty

With the return of spring one can also anticipate the return of our Island butterflies. P.E.I. has a fine variety of these beautiful flying insects. Some are early risers, such as the Mourning Cloak, which has been seen flying around while there is still snow on the ground. The Atlantis Fritillary prefers the warmer weather of July and August.

Many small butterflies go unnoticed because of their size. Two such ones are the seemingly rare Striped Hairstreak, and the equally tiny Common Blue, which likes to hide in tall grasses.

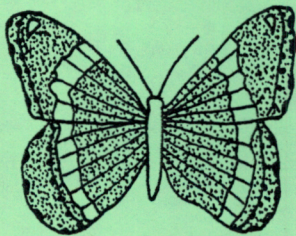
Larger, brightly colored Red Admirals and orange and pink American Painted Ladies seem to lead the color parade as they flutter around the fields landing on flowers.

Some still larger Island butterflies include the yellow and black striped Tiger Swallowtail, and the white and black striped White Admiral. The orange and black Viceroy, often mistaken for the Monarch, which isn't found on the Island, can also be seen soaring over fields in the summer.

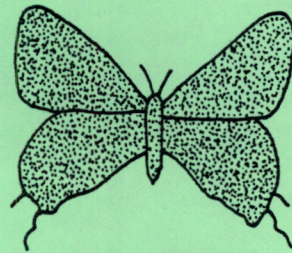
There are of course the butterflies everyone is familiar with: the Pink-edged Sulfurs (its buttery yellow wings probably gave the butterfly its name) and the white Cabbage Butterfly despised by leafy-vegetable farmers because of the feeding habits of its caterpillar.

You may be certain that one of the aforementioned insects, or others, can be seen on a warm Prince Edward Island day from April to September.

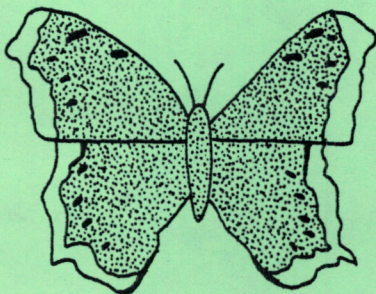
(Not life size)



White Admiral



Striped Hairstreak



Mourning Cloak



Pink-edged Sulfur