



11th Annual Celebration ***July 23-31, 2022***

Media contact: Sandra Lanman
sandra.lanman@gmail.com

Calendar Brief: **July 23-31:** The 11th Annual National Moth Week will spotlight the daytime world of caterpillars and their role in the life cycle of moths along with nighttime, winged flyers. Registration is free for private and public events in the U.S. and around the world at nationalmothweek.org.

National Moth Week 2022 Spotlights Caterpillars And the Life Cycle of Moths, July 23-31

The daytime world of leaf-loving, crawling moth caterpillars will share the spotlight this year with night-flying, winged moths during the 11th Annual National Moth Week, July 23 through 31.

Moth-ers of all ages and abilities of all ages and abilities are invited to participate in this international citizen science project by observing and learning about day-crawling caterpillars and night-flying moths, which play an important part in ecosystems around the world. Individuals, groups and organizations can register their NMW 2022 events for free at nationalmothweek.org.

“Caterpillars are the larval form of adult moths and come in a wide variety of shapes and sizes and a rainbow of colors,” said ecologist Dr. Elena Tartaglia, professor of biology at Bergen Community College and founding member of the NMW team. “Some camouflage themselves as twigs, like Geometridae; some mimic snakes, like *Hemeroplanes triptolemis*; some are striped or spotted; and some even look like walking hair or gummy candy.”

A caterpillar's main duty is to eat as much as possible, says Tartaglia.

“I often say that ‘The Very Hungry Caterpillar’ is a work of non-fiction,” she said. “They are fun to look for and there is no need to stay up late because they can be found during the day.”

Since its founding in 2012, NMW has asked participants to share their moth photos and other data with [partner organizations](#) like iNaturalist, Project Noah, Bug Guide and others. This way, scientists can study the distribution of moth species and learn where moth populations might be threatened by

climate change or pollution. Hundreds of thousands of moth photos have been posted from around the world.

“This year we're looking to increase data submissions of caterpillars, while of course still celebrating the adult life stage we all love,” Tartaglia said.

Observing moths at night is as easy as turning on a porch light and seeing what’s flying. Moth-ers can also set up sheets with black light kits or mercury vapor set-ups to observe moths in their natural habitats. Always use caution and correct equipment when using electric lighting outdoors or generators to run lights.

Since 2012, NMW has inspired thousands of public and private moth-watching and educational events in over 90 countries and all 50 U.S. states. Sites have included National Parks and Monuments, museums and local recreation areas, private backyards and front porches – wherever there’s a light and a place for them to land.

National Moth Week is a project of the [Friends of the East Brunswick \(N.J.\) Environmental Commission](#), a nonprofit organization dedicated to environmental education and conservation. It is now one of the most widespread citizen science projects in the world. It is coordinated by volunteers on the [NMW team](#) and [country coordinators](#) around the world. It is held annually for nine days during the last full week and two weekends of July.

It is promoted all over the world by its international team members and country coordinators like [Indiana Cristo of Colombia](#) and Dr. V. Shubhalaxmi of India, whose iNaturewatch Foundation is launching a Moth Monitoring School Programme for Schools in India.

For more information about National Moth Week, visit nationalmothweek.org, or write to info@nationalmothweek.org. Also, find National Moth Week on Facebook, Twitter (@moth_week) and Instagram (mothweek). Hashtags: #Nationalmothweek #mothweek

Why study moths?

- Members of the Lepidoptera order of insects, moths are among the most diverse and successful organisms on earth.
- Moths are important pollinators for crops and flowers, and serve as a food source for birds, bats and other animals.
- Scientists estimate there are 150,000 to as many as 500,000 moth species.
- Their colors and patterns are either dazzling or so cryptic that they define camouflage. Shapes and sizes span the gamut from as small as a pinhead to as large as an adult’s hand.
- Most moths are nocturnal, and need to be sought at night to be seen – others fly like butterflies during the day.
- Finding moths can be as simple as leaving a porch light on and checking it after dark. Serious moth aficionados use special lights and baits to attract them.

###