Butterfly Wing Collage

Get inspired by up-close views of butterfly wings, and create a collage!

Materials Needed:

Cardstock, round lid to trace a circle, pencil, tissue paper, construction paper, scissors, glue. Optional: Hole punch, other craft materials (stickers, sequins, yarn, etc)

Instructions:

Step 1:

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Butterfly Colors

There are about 80 species of butterflies in Alaska. They come in many different colors and patterns, from the black-and-yellow Mourning Cloak to the blue shades of the Alaskan Blue and the tan-and-brown Tanana Arctic.

There are many reasons for butterflies to have specific colors and patterns:

Camouflage: Colors help butterflies blend into their environment and avoid predators. Alaska butterflies live in many different habitats, including boreal forests, tundra, bogs, fields, and meadows. Their colors and patterns help them match the colors of their surroundings.

Common Branded Skipper (*Hesperia comma borealis*) Image: Ken Philip.

Warmth: Butterflies need to absorb sunlight to stay warm. Darker colors absorb more sunlight, so some Arctic species have dark wing patterns.

Left: Tiger Swallowtail (*Papilio canadensis*) basking in the sun. UAMN photo.

Warning and Mimicry: Although there are no poisonous butterflies in Alaska, in other regions some species are brightly colored to warn predators that they are poisonous. Other non-poisonous butterflies have patterns that imitate poisonous species to fool predators.

Discover more about Alaska butterflies and see photos of the Kenelm Philip Collection: kenphilipcollection.alaska.edu

Did You Know?

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Alaska Butterflies Images

The butterflies pictured below are just a few of around 80 butterfly species that live in Alaska. Images are not to scale.

Canadian Tiger Swallowtail
Papilio canadensis

Giant Sulphur
Colias gigantea

Lively Clouded Sulphur
Colias philodice vitabunda

Arctic Skipper
Carterocephalus palaem(841tl1f* Gi.63Cl)1aJO2 Td<1s phLive2(n)695(lp)5(h)2.998(u)2.997gD 4( )]TJ /TTEcilolCailu2(a)-