

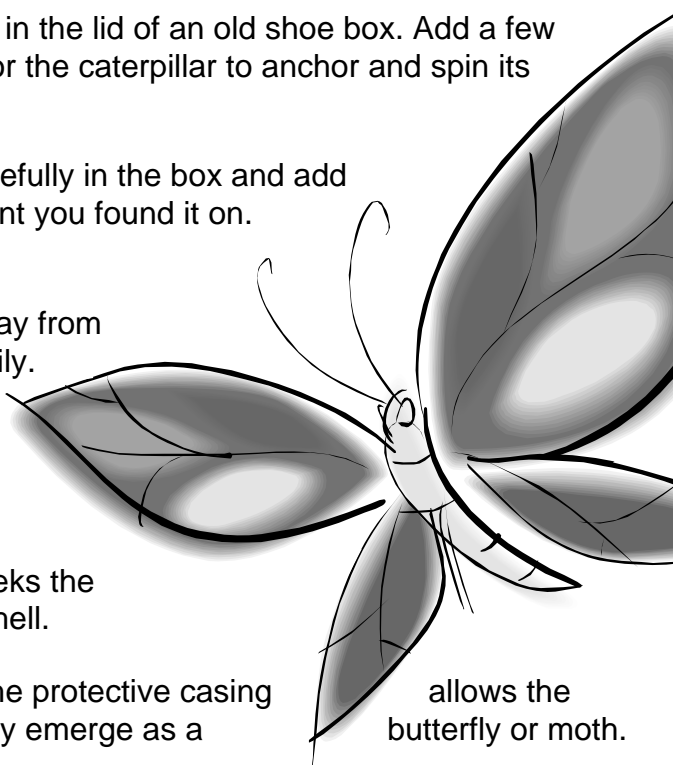


Caterpillar Capers

Next time you're in the garden picking summer vegies you might spot a caterpillar munching away on a favourite plant.

The best way to stop caterpillars eating all your leafy greens is to go caterpillar hunting and pick them off with your fingers.

Here's how to observe a little of nature's magic!

1. Use a screwdriver to poke a few holes in the lid of an old shoe box. Add a few large twigs. The twigs will provide a place for the caterpillar to anchor and spin its cocoon.
2. Find a caterpillar on a leaf. Place it carefully in the box and add some more of the leaves from the same plant you found it on. Replace the lid.
3. Place the shoe box in a warm spot away from direct sunlight. Check on your caterpillar daily. Carefully remove the old leaves and replace them with more fresh leaves from the same plant.
4. The caterpillar will munch it's way to happiness. Eventually, after a couple of weeks the caterpillar should have made a protective shell.
5. This is called a cocoon or chrysalis. The protective casing caterpillar to develop safely inside and finally emerge as a  allows the butterfly or moth.
6. Once the cocoon has been made the caterpillar should change into a butterfly within 7-10 days. If it hasn't hatched after this period carefully put it back outside.
7. Check the box two times a day. As soon as the change has taken place and you see a butterfly or moth inside take the box outside and release it.
8. This process of change is called metamorphosis and is a wondrous thing!