

## How's your Nature Knowledge?

### Student Introduction

- ▶ This resource will help your reading skills
- ▶ You will discover facts about some local birds and butterflies!

## There is a whole world of nature at Robin Hill!

- ▶ What can you discover about birds and butterflies at Robin Hill Country Park?

### TASK

- ✓ Read the information and answer the questions.

Buzzard



Glance skywards and you might see a buzzard circling 500 metres above you! The Island's population of buzzards has increased dramatically over the last 20 years and it is our largest local bird of prey. A number of nesting sites along the Arreton Downs means that a sighting is very common.

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Blue Tit



Our colourful blue tits can form quite large flocks, especially in winter. Groups of at least 20 are commonly seen here at Robin Hill. It is estimated by the RSPB that there are over 3.5 million breeding pairs in the UK. A blue tit can live to 21 years old!

Robin



There are Robins-a-plenty at Robin Hill, and this may well be the historical link to the park's name! Fiercely territorial and aggressive to other birds and its own kind, the Robin has more friends in the human world and is always voted our favourite native bird in opinion polls!

1. Which bird might have a historical link to the park's name?

2. How long can a Blue Tit live for?

3. Which bird might you see 'strutting in the undergrowth'?

4. Which bird is 'very common' over Robin Hill?





Peacock



A beautiful and easily recognised butterfly thanks to its eye spots, designed to frighten or confuse predators. These patterns were thought to resemble those on a peacock's tail feathers, hence the name. Their black caterpillars eat nettles while the adults feed on nectar and the juices of rotting fruit.

Red Admiral



A large butterfly which migrates to reach us from Europe in the spring. These adults lay their eggs on nettles and the black caterpillars then grow to become the late summer 'home-grown' butterflies that we see in August. Although these adults will try to hibernate, very few can survive the British frosts in winter.

Small Tortoiseshell



Often the commonest of our butterflies and easy to spot, but it has regular periods when its population suffers dramatic decline. These cycles are thought to be linked to weather and the abundance of certain parasitic wasps. The caterpillars feed on nettles and protect themselves from bad weather and predators beneath a silk tent they spin together.

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6. Which butterfly is sometimes killed off by a type of wasp?

7. What does the Peacock butterfly and its caterpillars feed on?

8. Which butterflies die off over winter?

