

# Holly Blue Butterfly

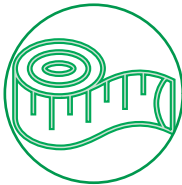
## Habitat Hero



**Common Name:** Holly Blue  
**Irish Name:** Gormán Cuilinn  
**Scientific Name:** *Celastrina argiolus*

### Seen in Ireland:

Flight period: April – May across all of Ireland, and; July – August in areas where the butterfly has a second brood (which is only in the south of Ireland, where weather is milder).



The wings are mainly pale blue, 26mm-35mm across.



Found in gardens containing Holly and Ivy, and also close to old woodlands that have Holly and Ivy plants. Holly blues can complete their life cycle on other plants, including bramble, dogwoods, gorses, snowberry and spindle, but their main host plants are Holly and Ivy.

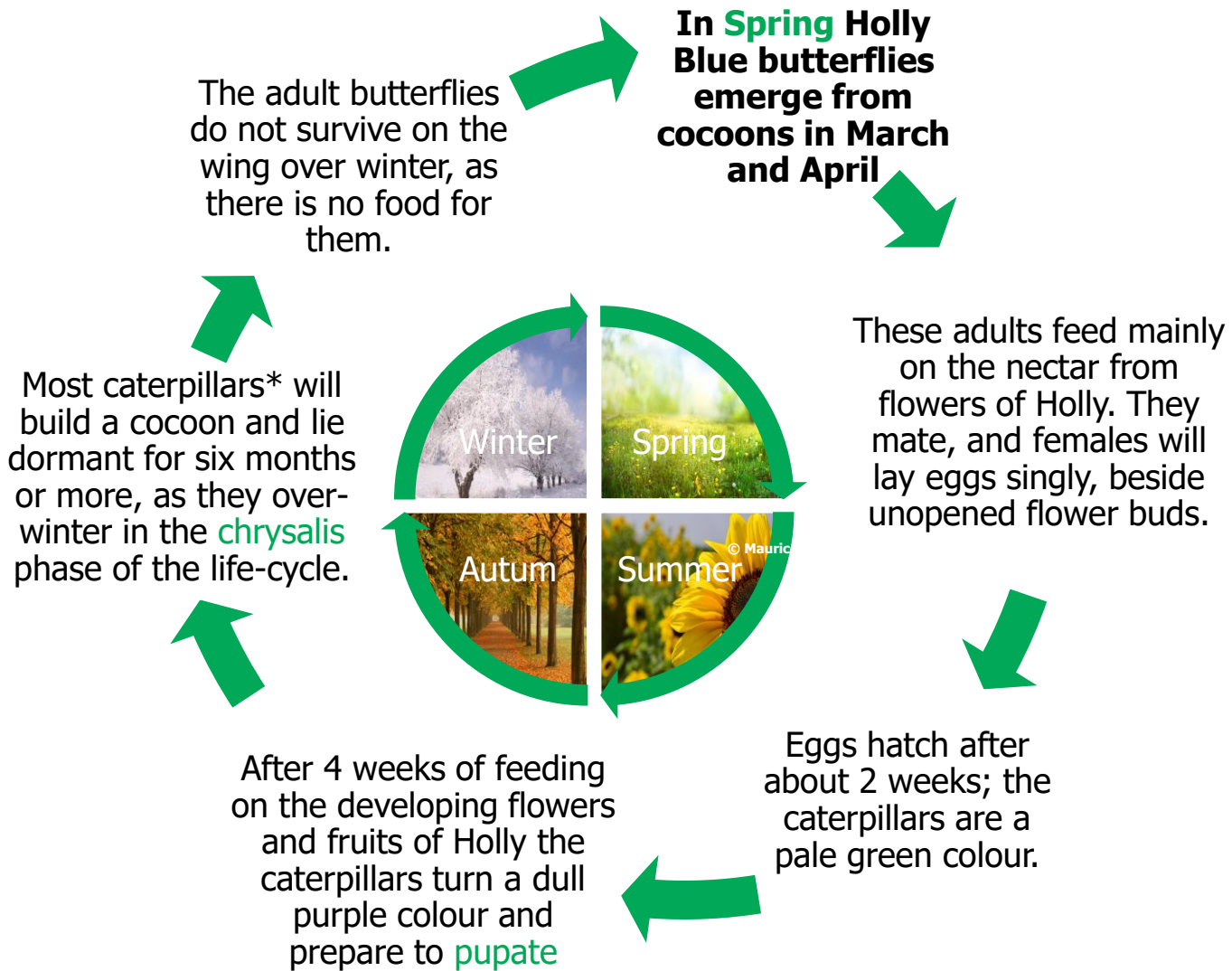


The larvae feed mostly on the flower buds, berries and leaves of Holly in the spring, and Ivy in the summer.



The Holly Blue butterfly only lives a few weeks as a butterfly but can last over-winter in the chrysalis phase of their life-cycle .

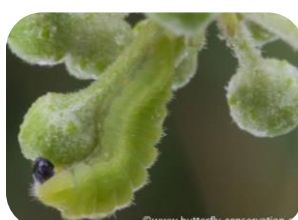
# Holly Blue Butterfly Life Cycle



Egg



Caterpillar



Cocoon



# Holly Blue Butterfly



## Some more Facts:

- The wings are mainly pale blue, 26mm-35mm across.
- The upper wing (when wings are open) has a black border, which is more pronounced in females.
- The underside of the wing (visible when wings are closed) are even paler blue, almost silvery, with small black dots and streaks.
- **Metamorphosis** is the name given to how a caterpillar becomes a butterfly or moth.
- There are four stages in the metamorphosis of butterflies: egg, larva, pupa, and adult. Adult butterflies lay the eggs
- The young that come out of the eggs are called 'Larva'; in this case they are caterpillars.
- After a large feed the caterpillars are ready to **pupate**, caterpillars will build a cocoon and most spend six months or more, as they over-winter in the chrysalis phase of the life-cycle.
- In the cocoon the pupa transforms into a butterfly.
- Holly Blue Butterflies that live in the southern half of the island of Ireland can double-brood!
- This means that the first caterpillars born in early Summer, turn into butterflies within a few weeks; they get out flying in July or early August.
- These butterflies then mate and lay eggs, which grow into caterpillars by the end of the Summer.
- This second batch of caterpillars only feed on Ivy (as Holly flowers are no longer available).
- This brood of caterpillars will over-winter in cocoons.

