



How do humans impact butterfly and moths habitats?

Casper J. Breuker & Melanie Gibbs



UK Centre for
Ecology & Hydrology

- In the UK, butterfly and moth numbers are getting less in many of the habitats in which they live
- There are many reasons why, but 3 examples are given below:
 - ❖ 1. Their habitats have been destroyed by humans
 - ❖ 2. Humans have split-up their habitats into smaller places
 - ❖ 3. Humans use insecticides used to kill insect pests



Habitats destroyed

- Humans destroy habitats when they change the environment around them to make it nicer or easier for humans to live in:
 - ❖ To build roads, houses and towns
 - ❖ To create more land to farm and make food for humans
 - ❖ To plant trees and/or make parks and play areas



Splitting-up habitats into smaller places

- ❖ Reduces the amount of space that the animals have to live
- ❖ Causes food resources to become spread out so that they are very far away or difficult to find
- Splitting-up habitats in this way is called habitat fragmentation
- Habitat fragmentation can also change the conditions inside the habitat



Using Insecticides

- Sometimes, rather than immediately kill the moth or butterfly insecticides can have unwanted side-effects like affecting:
 - ❖ how well the caterpillar grows, or
 - ❖ how well the caterpillar can move to find food, or a safe place to hide from predators.
- These unwanted side-effects can cause a drop in the number of moths and butterflies that survive

