

Magnificent Moths



Io Moth

There are over 2,000 moth species in the Great Lakes Region, vastly outnumbering butterflies (160 species). Why don't we pay more

attention to these nighttime fliers? Nocturnal habits mean most moths are active long after we've gone to bed. Even during the day moths are hard to find. Disguised as a leaf, twig or even bird poop, many species use cryptic coloring to hide from birds and other predators. Moths also use brilliant hues and colorful "eyes" to warn or startle an attacker.

Not all moths have a moth-like appearance. Moths that mimic toxic fireflies and venomous bumblebees or wasps use this fake facade to avoid predation.



Lilac Borer

Cecropia moths are one of the largest moth species found at CNC. Lacking any mouth parts to feed, adult Cecropias only survive long enough to reproduce, usually one to two weeks.



Cecropia Moth

Going Mothing

Interested in finding and observing moths? Give 'mothing' a try!

Moths are attracted to light so observing a porch light at night is a simple way to look for moths. Light in the UV spectrum is more effective so a black light on a white sheet is another easy setup (pictured below). When you're done, make sure to turn lights off so the moths are able to continue their nightly routines.



Check out mothing at the nature center during CNC's "Moth Night" programs on July 19 and August 23.