Kid's corner

Cabbage Butterfly Decoys

Last year we had lovely quantities of rain and our dragonflies, butterflies and moths had perfect conditions to flourish. One thing that I have noticed is the quantity of cabbage butterflies visiting my vegetable garden.
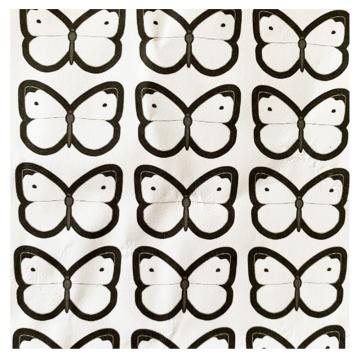
About 75% of plants need pollination to reproduce. Pollinators can be bees, butterflies, beetles, wasps, moths, flies and birds. All of these amazing pollinators are essential for a plant's pollination and lifecycle.

Cabbage white butterfly larvae rely greatly on a host plant. The larvae can also be a food supply for birds and other wildlife. After their metamorphosis they become butterflies.

This year I have had so many of these pesky cabbage white butterflies eating my veggie crops so I decided to place some decoys into my garden.

Cabbage white butterfly decoys are fake butterflies which fool the genuine article into thinking your vegetable garden already has a resident population. Cabbage white butterflies are highly territorial and females won't choose to lay eggs where there's already competition for food. A decoy or two is usually enough to convince a visiting cabbage white butterfly to lay her eggs in other, less crowded areas, hopefully leaving your vegetables to grow in peace.

Let's make some cabbage white butterfly decoys! They may discourage the females from settling their brood in your garden! This is a great way of trying to manage your cabbage butterfly pest population, instead of using harmful sprays that hurt our Australian native butterflies.

You will need the following materials…
- 1 piece of cardboard
- 1 copy of the sheet depicting the white cabbage butterflies (below)
- Some small sticks

Then.....
- Paste the Cabbage Moth sheet to the piece of cardboard
- Cut out the shapes
- Glue onto the stick
- Place them around your veggie garden in prominent positions

Good luck! We would love to see pictures of your decoys in your vegetable garden! Send them to operations@opengardensvictoria.org.au