

The Girl Who Turned into a Butterfly

Place-based Ecology and Natural History:

This story has information about the life cycle, identification, and food sources of the Mourning Cloak Butterfly. It also hints at what preys on butterflies and one of the main plants hosts of the Mourning Cloak, specifically. It is told in the spring to align with Mourning Cloak's seasonal appearance as often it is the first butterfly seen in Maine late March/early April. The story is also about the willow tree, its preferred habitat, its relationship with the Mourning Cloak butterfly, and some of what it can offer to humans for making and eating.

Explore:

- Go hiking on a sunny dry day and look for the Mourning Cloak butterfly.
- Identify a willow tree (or bush) by its pussy willows out at this time of year.
- Make something out of willow wands.
- Find a special tree in the forest that you love and bring it little gifts.
- Play a game outside that involves turning into another creature!
- Choose an animal or plant that has an interesting name and make up a story about how they came by this name.

Reflect and Share:

- If you *couldn't* talk to humans, who would you talk to? What would it be like?
- Why do think insects have host plants that they always return to to lay their eggs on?
- Tell a friend what you would want to look like if you were a butterfly, what your name would be, and what plant you would have as a host plant. Draw a picture of yourself!

Photos:



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