

# Blending Butterflies – Camouflage 101

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Many animals use camouflage, including butterflies. Different animals use different types of camouflage. Check out the examples below.

## Concealing Coloration

This type of camouflage uses coloration to hide against a background of the same color. Many desert animals have tan or muted coloring that blends in with the sand that surrounds them. Desert bighorn sheep and Texas horned lizards are great examples of camouflaged desert animals.



## Disruptive Coloration

This type of camouflage breaks up the solid outline of an animal with spots, stripes, or other patterns that resemble the animal's habitat. When a white-tailed deer fawn is born, it has white spots on its back, allowing the fawn to hide on the ground among the grasses. A fawn's spots look like rays of light peeking through the trees.



## Disguises

When animals or parts of their bodies look like objects in their environment. The walking stick is an insect that looks like a small tree branch or twig.



## Counter Shading

When the coloration of the upper parts of an animal is darker than its underside it's called countershading. This causes the effect of sunlight to be counteracted. Most whales are counter-shaded. If you looked up at a whale from underwater, you would see a light color, just as if the whale was not there—it blends in with the sky. If you look down on a whale, you would see darkness like the ocean floor.



## Mimicry

Mimicry is when an animal copies, or mimics, a color or form of something else. Many butterflies use mimicry to survive. Hairstreak butterflies have false antennae and spots on the back of their wings. Birds will peck at the wrong end trying to grab the head, allowing the butterfly to get away.

