

# Letters to David: Flutter



To: meng@sreserve.org.sg

From: education@gardensbythebay.com.sg

Subject: Flutter

Dear Meng,

How is life at the reserve? Our outdoor gardens have been growing out very nicely. And guess what? The animals have been slowly, but surely returning to this area now that the plants have established themselves.

Recently, we have had more and more sightings of butterflies. Just the other day, I saw a **Plain Tiger (*Danaus chrysippus*)**. I'd read that when attacked, the butterfly sometimes fakes its own death by secreting a foul-tasting liquid, causing its predator to release it. Some other butterflies "mimic" the wing pattern of the Plain Tiger to trick predators into thinking that they are poisonous too. Animals are really clever, don't you think?

Here's a picture of the Plain Tiger I saw. Am sending you one of the caterpillar as well. I saw it in this book I was reading.

Looking forward to learning more about our local butterflies at the reserve this Saturday! It will really help me with our fauna surveys here.

Warmest regards,  
David



Attachments: [plain\\_tiger.jpg](#)  
[plain\\_tiger2.jpg](#)

# Letters to David: Flutter



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From: meng@sreserve.org.sg

Subject: Re: Flutter

Dear David,

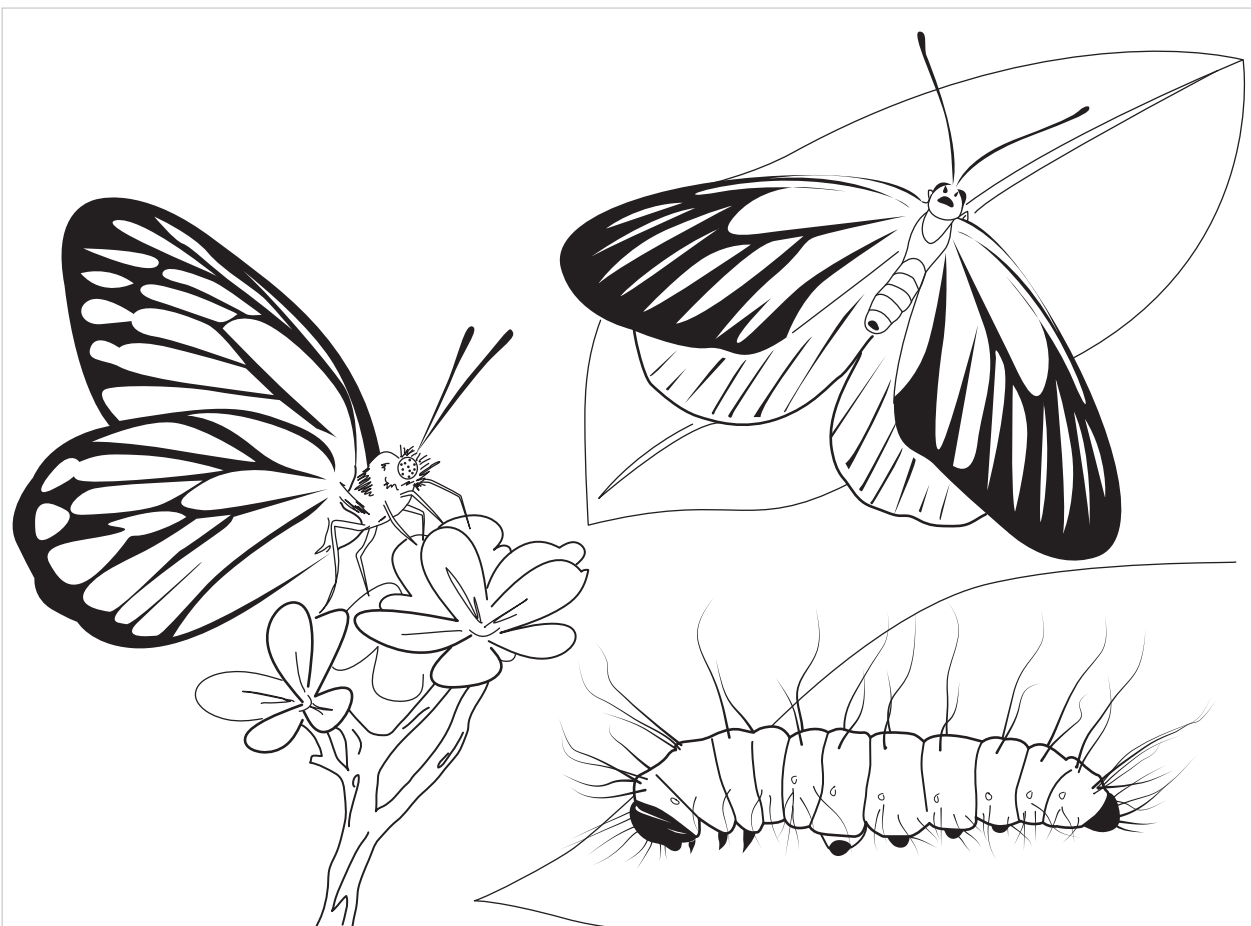
Thank you for the pictures of the Plain Tiger! Things are good here. There has been more rain recently, which is good for our epiphytic ferns.

So happy to hear that the Plain Tiger is at the Gardens. Have you spotted any **Painted Jezebels (*Delias hyparete metarete*)**? They are one of my favourites! They have such beautiful wings ... It's hard to believe that this brilliantly coloured butterfly is actually poisonous and the bright colours serve as a warning to would-be predators! We usually see them around our treetops here, coming down only to feed. Did you know the host plant for its caterpillars, the Common Malayan Mistletoe (*Dendrophthoe pentandra*), is a parasite to trees? So, in their own way, these butterflies are helping to keep our ecosystem in check.

You are right, David! Animals are amazing! Here's a picture I found of the Painted Jezebel and its larva.

Looking forward to Saturday too!

Best regards,  
Meng



Attachment: [painted\\_jezebel.jpg](#)



# Letters to David: Fascinating Trees

Dear Mr David,

My name is Noel. I am in Primary 5 this year. I am doing a school project about fascinating trees around the world.

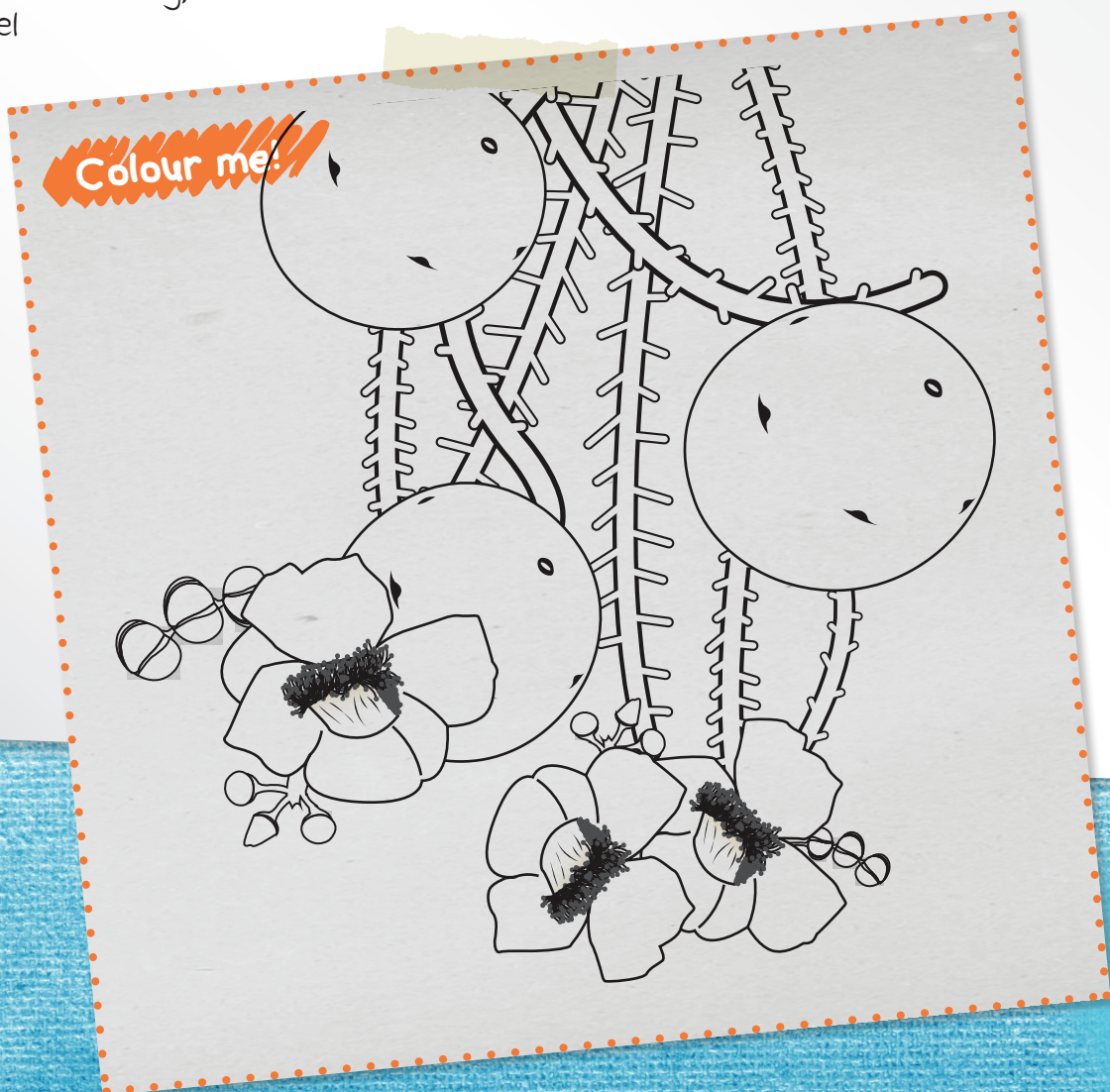
Last weekend, I visited Gardens by the Bay and noticed a really interesting-looking tree called the **Cannonball Tree (*Couroupita guianensis*)**. It had branches that looked like tentacles, with fruit and flowers growing out of them! The fruit really looked like cannonballs and the flowers, like little pink aliens! I looked up the tree on the internet and read that the tree is pollinated by bats, which are attracted to its strongly scented flowers. I also read that the flowers and fruit of the tree can be used as medicine. Is that true?

I drew a picture of the Cannonball Tree here, in case you do not know which one I am talking about.

Can you tell me about any other fascinating trees at Gardens by the Bay?

Thank you.

Yours Sincerely,  
Noel





# Letters to David: Fascinating Trees

Dear Noel,

What an exciting project you are doing! Good for you!

Yes, it is true that the Cannonball fruit and flowers have been used in traditional medicines. It is also considered a sacred plant to Indian Buddhists.

We have many interesting trees here. One of my favourites is the Ghost Tree (*Moringa drouhardii*). Even its name is scary! It is named as such because it is often grown near grave sites (and between you and me, I think it is also because its winding branches make it look creepy and ghostly at night!). In reality, there is nothing scary about it! It is a type of Bottle Tree native to Madagascar. Its seeds can be eaten and made into oil. Here is a sketch of it.

I hope you find this information helpful.

Do let me know if there is any other way I can help!

Best regards,  
David

Colour me!

