The beautiful butterflies which look like exotic plants as they descend on flowers to feed

By Sara Malm


These flowers may catch your eye for their beautiful colours and exotic patterns, but take a closer look and you will see the petals are actually dozens of colourful butterflies. The images, captured at first morning light, show a range of colourful winged insects as they land on flowers and plants to drink from their nectar. The incredible images were captured by Italian photographer Mauro Maione, 58, who spends hours painstakingly waiting for the right moment to snap away.
Flower power: A full six white butterflies have landed on the heart of a flower, making their wings resemble fluttering petals

He sets his shots up at an insect hotspot near his home prior to sunrise before patiently waiting for the sun to come up when thousands of butterflies descend on the plants. Mauro, an electronics salesman, said: ‘I was really excited to see the composition of the butterflies I had photographed. ‘For them to appear to land on the plants and use their wings like petals I thought was something very fascinating that I am unlikely to ever see again quite like that.'
Morning meet: A group of the be-winged insects have landed on a flower still covered in dew for a chat in the early hours
Flew-some two-some: Their wings still wet, the butterfly couple take rest until the sun rises to dry them up
Flowers in flight: At first glance these might look like exotic flowers - but a closer look reveals that the petals are butterflies landing for a spot of breakfast.
Honeydew: Thousands of butterflies descend on the plants at dawn to feed from the flowers' nectar.
Perfect shot: Italian photographer Mauro Maione, 58, spends hours painstakingly for the right moment in order to perfectly capture the butterflies on film.

‘I go to the fields before sunrise when the insects are still asleep and it is full of dew. ‘Then I move around a little with my equipment to get into position but of course you need a lot of luck on your side too. ‘Being in touch with nature is something I love which is why my favourite way to shoot is a macro technique because you are so close to the creatures - I love the animal world.’
Like parent, like child: A beautifully patterned butterfly spreads its wings next to an equally exotic looking caterpillar.

Source: here
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