

Mass Release Instructions

Please read the following instructions prior to transferring the butterflies out of their special packages into a mass release box. For transfers into cages, see the other side of this sheet. This instruction sheet is designed to supplement (not replace) the existing instruction sheet for butterfly storage.

The day before your event you will receive the butterflies in “transfer envelopes” which will arrive in a protective shipping container with a freeze pack. This special packaging will make the transfer much easier than using our standard release boxes. The butterflies will come with another set of instructions on how to store them in that container for warm or cool weather. **Please read those instructions carefully on how to properly store the butterflies. The below information is primarily for how to transfer the butterflies into the mass release containers.**

If you plan to do a lot of traveling with the butterflies, then keep them in their original packaging and shipping container and transport them that way (the way they were delivered to you). Once you are at a place where you won't need to move the butterflies around as much, then it will be OK to transfer them. We highly recommend waiting until you get to your final destination before transferring the butterflies into the Viewing / Release cage due to the constant agitation of the butterflies when all together in one cage. Transferring into the cage is very simple and should not take much time at all.

The transfer:

1. **2 to 3 hours prior to the release** take the butterflies out of their original shipping container (while the ice packs are still cold). The butterflies need to be cool while transferring. If necessary, it is OK to place butterflies while in their special transfer packages into a refrigerator for 15 to 30 minutes to help them chill. **DO NOT FREEZE.**
2. Take the butterflies out of the cooled container or refrigerator one package at a time into a small room (a bathroom or large closet is perfect), set at standard room temperature and then close the door.
3. Take each special transfer package and slip inside the box just under the lid or in the slot at the top of the release cage. Try to keep the lid on as much as possible to avoid butterflies “slipping out!” Open the packages with the butterflies in it upside down and allow the butterflies to simply slide out of the transfer envelope into the box. We normally put 2 butterflies in each package. It generally takes about 10 minutes per dozen to complete this job for an untrained “butterfly wrangler.”

Note - you should be able to transfer all the butterflies into your box with no escapees. However, should a butterfly escape during the transfer process, you will need to recapture it. Butterflies are attracted to light, so the escapee will likely fly toward a window or other source of light in the room. Simply pick it up by the wings (which will be closed). Alternately, you can cup your hands around the escapee if the wings aren't closed and transfer it to the box. Despite what you've always been told, handling a butterfly gently will not harm it.

Storage until release time is fairly simple. The most important thing to consider is to avoid letting them get too warm. Do not leave your butterflies in direct sunlight or prolonged exposure to high heat such as parked cars or hot patios for more than 15 minutes. Keep them indoors at a cool-room temperature and place in an area where the butterflies will be free from being bumped or jolted. You may even place the mass release box (with the butterflies in them) back inside of a cooler or the cooled shipping container. But, give them at least 20 minutes to warm up in the sunlight in order to be active enough to fly away quickly.

Release Time! Please see the regular instruction sheet for tips on how to store and release the butterflies.