

# Butterfly Collector



*An app license management tool for macOS  
made with great angst*

Ari Feldman, 3 January 2026  
[info@widgetworx.com](mailto:info@widgetworx.com)

## System Requirements

This program is a Universal app, so it should run on any Apple Silicon (M1/M2/M3/M4, etc) or recent Intel-based Mac running macOS Ventura, Sonoma, Sequoia, or Tahoe.

## There Will be Bugs! (hopefully, not too many)

I'm a sporadic, hobbyist developer who only took a couple of Computer Science classes before realizing I had no natural programming aptitude. Anyway, tell me about them and I'll do my best to fix them.

## Your Privacy

**Butterfly Collector** has no application telemetry whatsoever.

## Give Feedback

I would welcome constructive feedback on how to make **Butterfly Collector** better for you and your use cases. Please complete [this form](#) or reach out to me directly.

# Table of Contents

## [Introduction](#)

[Potential Uses for Butterfly Collector](#)

[The Butterfly Collector Nag Screen](#)

[A Word About Registration](#)

[Registering for Butterfly Collector](#)

## [Running Butterfly Collector for the First Time](#)

## [The Butterfly Collector User Interface and Features Walkthrough](#)

## [The Butterfly Collector Menu Bar Options](#)

[File Menu](#)

[Automatic Database Backups](#)

[Housekeeping Menu](#)

## [Getting Licenses into Butterfly Collector](#)

## [Butterfly Collector and AppleScript](#)

[AppleScript Dictionary](#)

[AppleScript Examples](#)

## [Troubleshooting Butterfly Collector](#)

[Restoring the Butterfly Collector Database](#)

## [Version History](#)

# Introduction

**Butterfly Collector** is a lightweight tool designed to help you organize, track, and manage all your software licenses in one place. Instead of juggling spreadsheets, emails, or paper notes, it lets you store details such as license keys, publisher/vendor, version number, platform, app category, cost/price paid, expiration dates, and a slew of other important details using a clean interface. Purchase receipts or external license files can be attached directly to each entry. Meanwhile features such as search and filters let you quickly locate the license information you need fast and efficiently.

**Butterfly Collector** can also help you stay on top of your license renewals. For example, expired licenses can be highlighted, and subscription licenses can be added to your macOS Calendar for reminders.

You can drag applications you have installed over to **Butterfly Collector** and also export your license data for further analysis and even import app data from [Revok](#) to quickly build up your license database or keep it updated to reflect recent updates.

Whether you're managing a handful of personal subscriptions or a large collection of professional software, **Butterfly Collector** gives you a clear view of your licenses and their lifecycle, so you spend less time searching, and more time using your tools.

## Potential Uses for **Butterfly Collector**

- **Freelancers & Small Businesses**

Keep track of multiple software subscriptions (design tools, IDEs, productivity apps) in one place, with reminders before renewals.

- **Developers & Power Users**

Manage personal collections of development tools, open-source packages with commercial add-ons, and trial software, avoiding lost keys and expired test periods.

- **Creative Professionals**

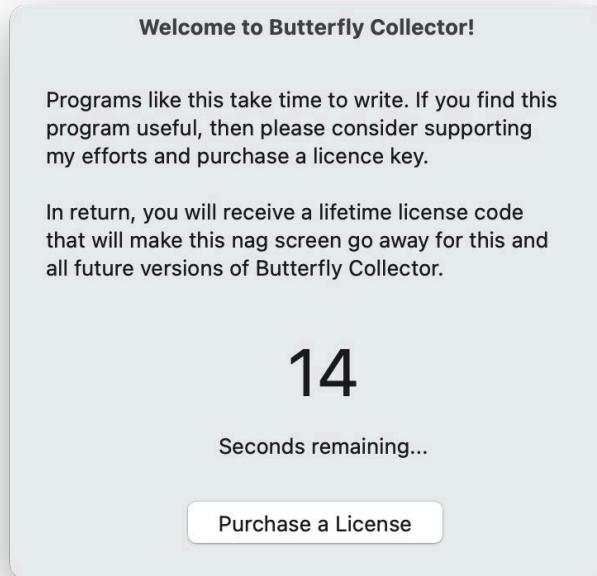
Organize licenses for media tools (photo, video, audio, design), and attach purchase receipts for expense tracking.

- **Educational & Non-profit Organizations**

Track discounted educational licenses, ensure compliance with non-commercial terms, and keep visibility into renewal schedules.

## The Butterfly Collector Nag Screen

Each time you run **Butterfly Collector**, you will see a nag screen like the one shown below. It will appear for 15 seconds and will only appear when you start **Butterfly Collector**. You can get rid of it forever by purchasing a license.



## A Word About Registration

Creating and maintaining apps like **Butterfly Collector** takes a lot of time and effort even if I enjoy it, so I'd appreciate getting paid something for that work when possible. That said, I understand that **Butterfly Collector** might not provide enough value for everyone, and I don't want price to be a barrier. **I think this is very fair:** You get a fully functional app to try out as long as you need, but with a time-delayed nag screen and limitations on the number of licenses you can manage. If you find it valuable, you'll support me by purchasing a license. If you don't, you won't.

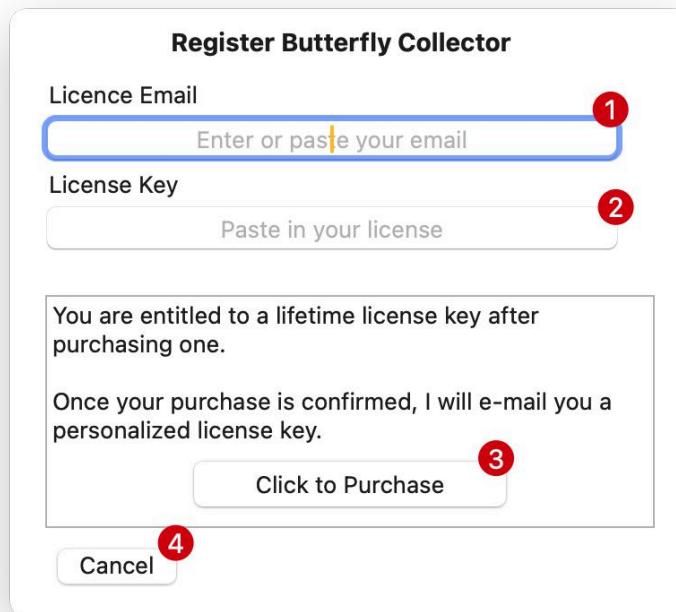
**Butterfly Collector** licenses are for a lifetime (you won't be asked for more money if I release updates) and can be used on any number of Macs in your household. In addition, you can get rid of a big restriction — unlicensed versions can only create and manage 30 software licenses while licensed versions can handle 3,072.

# Registering for Butterfly Collector

You can register Butterfly Collector by selecting the **Housekeeping** → **Register Butterfly** menus:



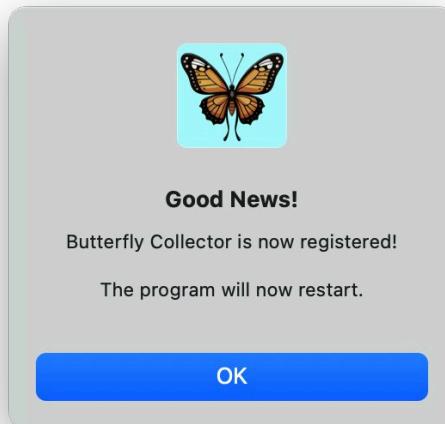
This will bring up the **Butterfly Collector Registration** window:



- **License Email:** This field accepts an email address up to 80 characters long. The email can be typed in or pasted and must match the email address you used when purchasing a license.
- **License Key:** This field accepts a license key. The key is unique to the email entered in the previous field. You can only paste the key into this field and it must exactly match the license key I email you after purchasing a license.
- **Click to Purchase Button:** Clicking this button will take you to my Store page where you can buy a license for **Butterfly Collector**, which entitles you to a license key.

- **Cancel Button:** Clicking this button will close the window without applying any changes.

Upon successfully registering, you will see a notification like the image shown below:



The program will restart without the nag screen or license management restrictions.

If you ever have problems registering, you can register using the macOS Terminal and following these steps:

1. Quit **Butterfly Collector** if it's running.
2. In the macOS Terminal, type:

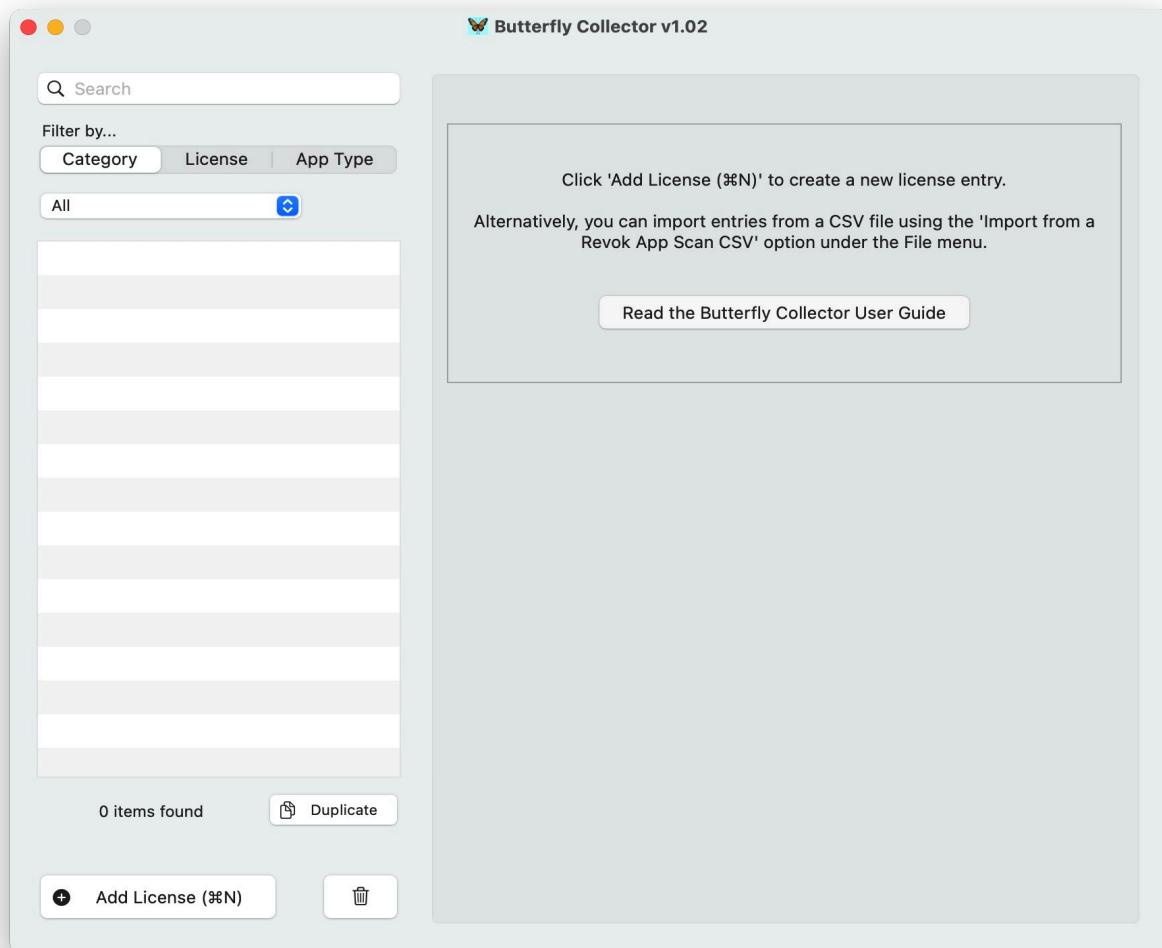
```
defaults write com.ari.ButterflyCollector RegEmail <email> where  
<email> is the email in your license key and press the Return key
```

```
defaults write com.ari.ButterflyCollector RegKey <key> where <key> is  
your license key and press the Return key
```

3. Restart **Butterfly Collector**. It will be registered.

# Running Butterfly Collector for the First Time

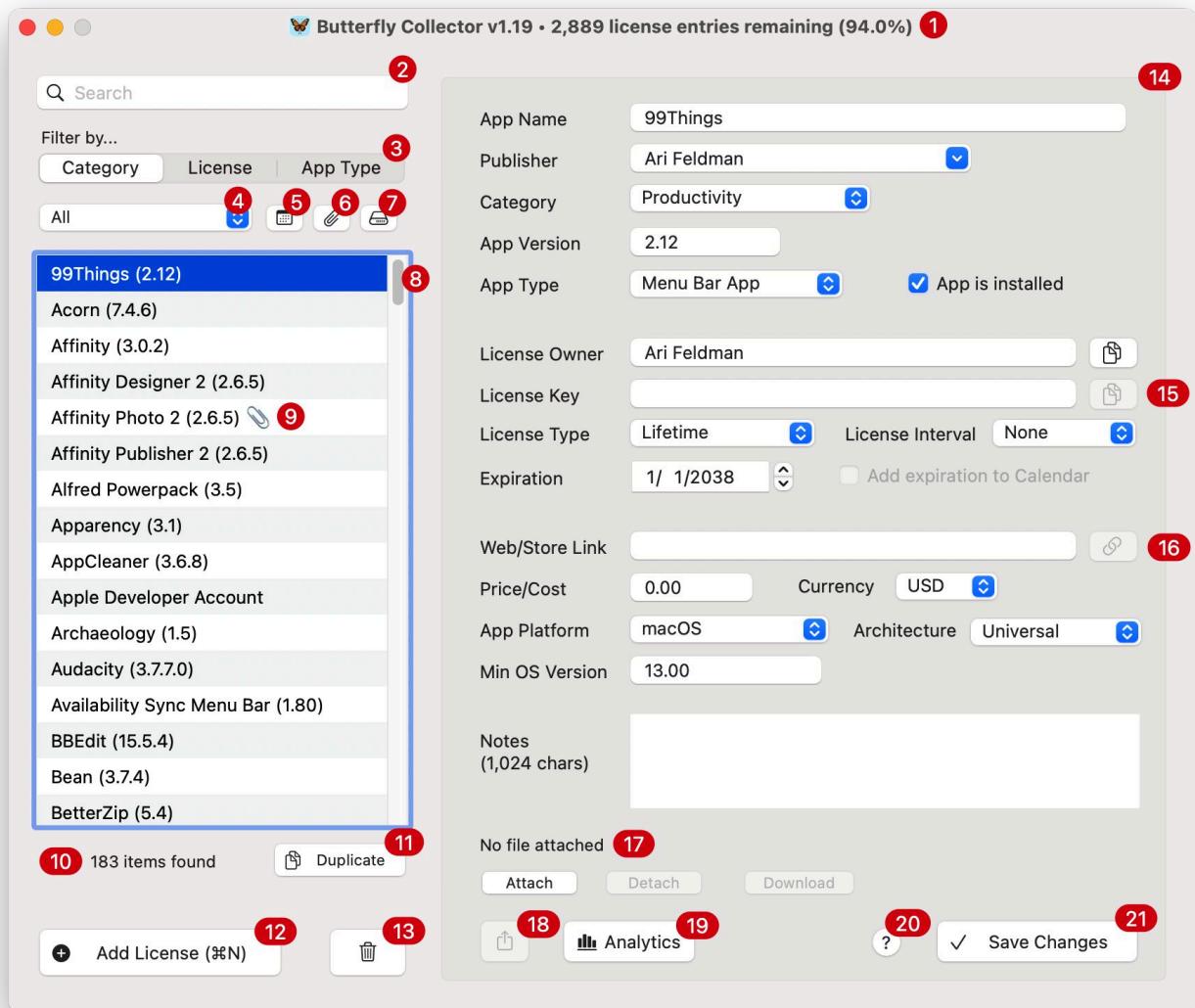
The first time you run **Butterfly Collector** it will display a blank window similar to the one shown below where you are prompted to add one or more licenses.



How you get licenses into **Butterfly Collector** can vary depending on your workflow and needs. However, importing a list of your installed apps generated by my [Revok](#) app scanner can help with this process. Refer to [this section](#) for more information.

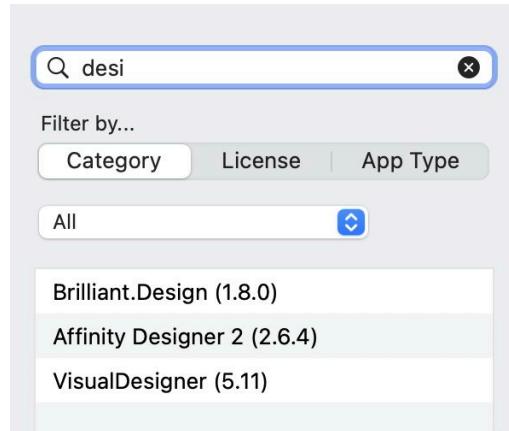
# The Butterfly Collector User Interface and Features Walkthrough

The main **Butterfly Collector** window and options are illustrated below:



- 1. License Entries Remaining:** This shows the number of entries that can be created. It is calculated by subtracting the number of license entries in **Butterfly Collector's** database from the maximum number of licenses supported.
- 2. Search Field:** You can search for licenses by typing in text here. Results will be returned immediately as you start typing.

Currently, **Butterfly Collector** will perform searches on licenses by **name**, **category** (e.g., video), **publisher** (e.g., Microsoft), **notes**, and **platform** (e.g., macOS) and return matches accordingly.



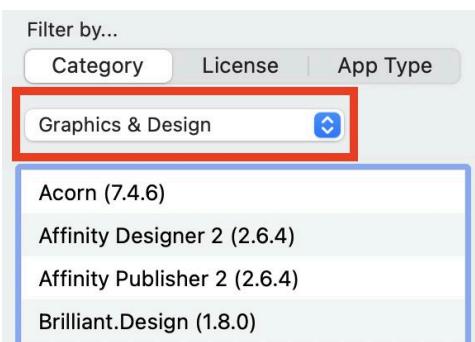
**Butterfly Collector's** search uses a basic weighting system to give you more relevant results:

Field	Weight	Rationale
<b>App Name</b>	<b>5</b>	Has the highest importance
<b>Category</b>	<b>4</b>	Between app name and vendor in terms of importance
<b>Publisher</b>	<b>3</b>	Still important but below Category
<b>OS Version, Platform</b>	<b>2</b>	Provides context relevance
<b>Notes</b>	<b>1</b>	Least relevant in search

3. **Filter Tabs:** Butterfly Collector allows you to filter on licenses in three (3) ways:

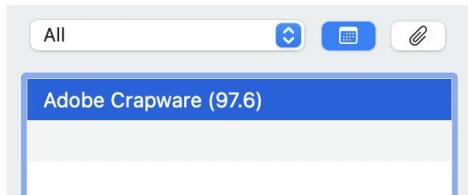
- **Category:** The official category that a given app is mapped to using Apple's official App Store category (e.g. Photo & Video).
- **License:** The actual license type associated with a given piece of software. For example, Subscription, etc.
- **App Type:** The type of application associated with a given license. For example, Desktop App, Driver, etc.

4. **Filter Menu:** This menu provides a list of items based on the currently selected **Filter tab**. For example, if the **Category filter tab** is selected, it will display entries such as *Productivity*, *Photo & Video*, etc. For example, see the image below:



**NOTE:** The number and type of **Filters** that appear in this menu are directly tied to the current contents of the **Butterfly Collector** data. For example, if you only have software with Lifetime licenses, then this filter will only show Lifetime. Thus, if an item isn't in your data, there won't be a **Filter** for it.

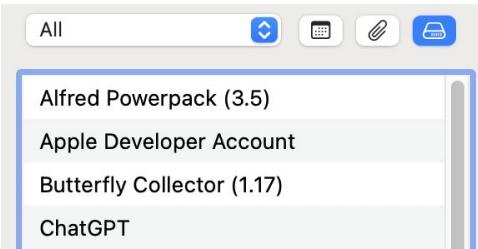
5. **Expired Licenses Filter:** Clicking this button will filter on licenses that have either expired or are soon-to-be expired within the past 30 days:



6. **Attachments Filter:** Clicking this button will filter on licenses that have file attachments associated with them:



7. **Non-installed Apps Filter:** Clicking this button will filter on licenses that are not currently installed on your Mac when compared against the license entries in **Butterfly Collector's** database:



Obviously, this doesn't apply for license entries that are stored in **Butterfly Collector** for Windows, mobile apps or various Online services.

8. **Software List:** This area displays a list of matching software titles that match your current search input and/or Filter selections. All titles are displayed in alphabetical order (A-Z).

Selecting any title will display its **License Attributes** for review and editing along the right-hand side of the **Butterfly Collector** window.

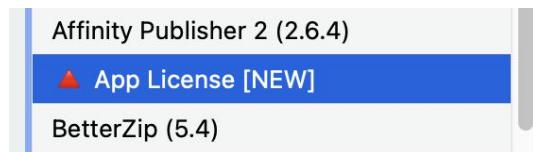
9. **File Attachment Icon:** Some software you may own does not use a traditional serial number or license key, but instead rely on an external file or has a PDF purchase receipt associated with it. If one is associated with your **Butterfly Collector** entry, it will appear here as a paperclip icon: 

10. **Item Count Indicator:** This displays a count of matching software licenses in **Butterfly Collector**. The number shown will vary based on your search input and/or **Filter** selections. A count of items in your licence database will also appear on the Mac's Dock:

11. **Duplicate License Button:** Clicking this button will duplicate (make an exact copy of) the currently selected license. All of its information will be the same, but it will have the phrase "Copy" appended to the name. Duplicated licenses appear in the **Software List** with a blue diamond icon as illustrated here:



**12. Add New License Button:** Clicking this button will create a new licence entry in **Butterfly Collector** with many of the details pre-populated with default values to save you time in editing. New license entries appear in the **Software List** with a red diamond icon as illustrated below and always have pre-generated names to help distinguish them from other entries:



**13. Delete License Button:** Clicking this button will remove the selected license from **Butterfly Collector**. Since this is a destructive action, you will be prompted to confirm this your intention before the entry is actually deleted.



**NOTE:** You can also delete Licenses by right-clicking on an entry OR by pressing the **⌘D** key.

**14. License Attributes:** This is where you can add or change various details associated with a given license entry. The following attributes are supported:

- **App Name:** This is the name for your software.

- **Publisher:** This is the name of your software's publisher, vendor, or author (if not a company). There is a drop down menu provided with the names of some common/well-known macOS software developers and publishers, but you can type in any name.
- **Category:** This menu provides a list of different categories you can assign your software. It uses Apple's [official App Store categories](#), which should be sufficient for most purposes.
- **App Version:** This field is for the current version of the software.
- **App Type:** This menu allows you to select the software's type. Possible values include:
  - i. *Desktop App*
  - ii. *Menu Bar App*
  - iii. *Background App*
  - iv. *System Tray App (Windows / Linux equivalent of a macOS Menu Bar app)*
  - v. *Mobile App*
  - vi. *Extension*
  - vii. *Exporter*
  - viii. *Driver*
  - ix. *Font*
  - x. *Stock Art*
  - xi. *Other*
- **App is installed:** This checkbox is used to indicate if a given license entry (assuming it is a macOS application) is currently installed on your Mac. It will automatically be checked if you use **Butterfly Collector's Audit installed Applications** functionality and will be disabled if the **App Platform Menu** is set to any value other than macOS.
- **License Owner:** This field is for licensee's information. Typically, this will be your name or the email address you used to purchase the software. By default, your name (the owner of the computer or current user) will appear for new License entries.

- **License Key:** This field is for the license key / serial number associated with the software. Since not all software applications use key numbers, this field may be blank. This field can support license keys up to 1024 characters in length.

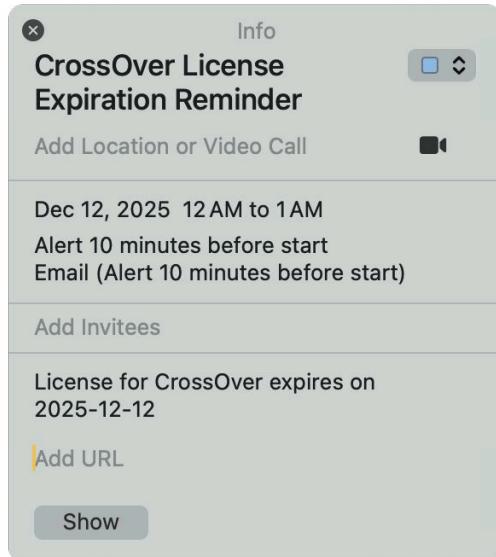
**NOTE:** By default, all **License Key** entries are masked unless you have enabled the **Do not mask the License key** option is enabled in the **Settings** window. However, you can press **⌘M** to toggle between masking the field and revealing its contents.

**NOTE:** If the **License Key** field is not masked, you can see the entire License key if the key is longer than 30 characters by hovering your mouse over the field.

- **License Type:** This menu allows you to select the type of license the software uses. Possible values supported include:
  - i. *Subscription*
  - ii. *Single version (the license is only good for the current version or a specific version of the software).*
  - iii. *Lifetime*
  - iv. *Educational*
  - v. *Site/Enterprise*
  - vi. *GPL*
  - vii. *MIT*
  - viii. *BSD*
  - ix. *Apache 2.0*
  - x. *BSL 1.1*
  - xi. *ISC*
  - xii. *Other*

Some of these options may enable other options. For example, selecting **Single version** would allow you to enter an **Expiration** date since some publishers make licenses good for a version of software that is updated annually.

- **License Interval:** Certain license types such as **Subscriptions** are billed on a recurring basis (e.g., monthly). This menu allows you to select the relevant time interval. Possible values are:
  - i. *None*
  - ii. *Monthly*
  - iii. *Quarterly*
  - iv. *Annually*
  - v. *Other*
- **Expiration:** Certain license types have hard expiration dates (e.g. December 10, 2025). This field allows you to enter this value if known. **Butterfly Collector** will check this date each time it runs to highlight which licenses have expired.
- **Add expiration to Calendar:** This checkbox is enabled when a given license has a potential expiration date. Checking it allows you to create an entry in **macOS Calendar** app, so you will have a reminder when a given license is set to expire. In the example, below, the expiration date for my copy of *CrossOver* is set to trigger on Dec 12 2025:



**NOTE:** **Butterfly Collector** does not sync with the **macOS Calendar**, so once a Calendar entry is created, it can't be removed directly from **Butterfly Collector**. However, the checkbox can help you understand that a Calendar entry was created to manage yourself.

- **Web/Store Link:** If there is a product page or App Store link associated with your software, you can enter it here. Any valid URL is allowed up to 1,024 characters.
- **Price/Cost:** This field allows you to add the purchase price of the software. **Butterfly Collector** will automatically assume the price / cost was made in your default system currency such as USD or GBP.
- **Currency:** This menu allows you to specify the currency the purchase was made in. Values supported include:
  - i.* *USD*
  - ii.* *EUR*
  - iii.* *GBP*
  - iv.* *CAD*
  - v.* *AUD*
  - vi.* *NZD*
  - vii.* *JPY*
  - viii.* *KRW*
  - ix.* *CNY*
  - x.* *NIS*
  - xi.* *SAR*
  - xii.* *CHF*
  - xiii.* *MXN*
  - xiv.* *BRL*
  - xv.* *INR*
  - xvi.* *IDR*
  - xvii.* *NOK*
  - xviii.* *SEK*
  - xix.* *DKK*
  - xx.* *ISK*

- xxi. *SGD*
- xxii. *TRY*
- xxiii. *VND*
- xxiv. *PHP*
- xxv. *TWD*
- xxvi. *HKD*
- xxvii. *CZK*
- xxviii. *CLP*
- xxix. *KES*

- **App Platform:** Since some users may use multiple machines for different purposes (say, both a Mac and a PC), this menu allows you to select the platform associated with the software. Possible values are:
  - i. *macOS*
  - ii. *Windows*
  - iii. *Online*
  - iv. *Linux*
  - v. *Cross-Platform*
  - vi. *iOS*
  - vii. *Android*
  - viii. *Other*
  - ix. *N/A*
- **Architecture:** Since software supports different computer / CPU architectures, this menu allows you to select them. Possible values are:
  - i. *Universal (both Apple Silicon and Intel x64)*
  - ii. *Apple Silicon*
  - iii. *ARM*
  - iv. *ARM64*
  - v. *Intel x64*

vi. *Intel x32*

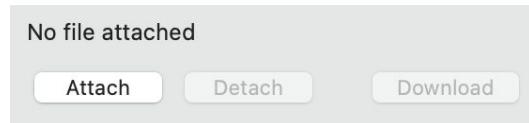
vii. *Other*

- **Min OS Version:** This field allows you to enter the minimum OS version that the software supports. For example, it could be 11.0 for macOS or Windows XP for PCs.
- **Notes:** This field lets you enter up to 1,024 characters for random notes you may have about your software. For example, for indicating that you purchased it during a special promotion, and so on.

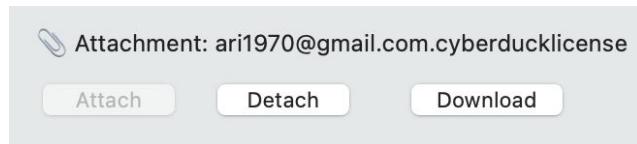
15. **Copy Attribute Buttons:** These buttons, when clicked, allow you to copy the current **License Owner** and/or **License Key** information to the Mac's clipboard. These buttons will be disabled if either field is empty.

16. **Open Link Button:** If there is a website or App Store link entered into the **Web/Store Link** field, you can click this icon to open it in your browser or the Apple Mac AppStore.

17. **Attachment Controls:** **Butterfly Collector** provides options to add an external file and associate with a given license entry. Both text and binary files are supported:



- **Attach Button:** This button will prompt you for the file to attach. When a file is attached, the UI appears as follows:



- **Detach Button:** This button will remove the file from your license entry.
- **Download Button:** This button will download a copy of the attached file to your Mac in the location of your choice.

**NOTE: Butterfly Collector** file attachments are limited to 5 megabytes in size.

**NOTE: Butterfly Collector** is pretty relaxed in terms of what fields are required to complete a License entry. Really, you only need a software title in the **App Name** field for an entry to be saved.

18. **Share License Button:** Clicking this button will allow you to share the selected license information using macOS' Sharing services (e.g., Mail, Messages, etc.). For example, this can be useful if you need to quickly share a license with a family member or coworker provided the license terms allow it. This button will be disabled if both the **License Owner** and **License Key** fields are empty.
19. **Analytics Button:** Clicking this button will display **Butterfly Collector's** [License Analytics](#) window. This is the same as selecting the menu option or using the **⌘I** keyboard shortcut.
20. **Keyboard Help Button:** Clicking this button shows you the different keyboard shortcuts you can use with **Butterfly Collector**:
  - **⌘N** - Add a new License
  - **⌘M** - Toggle **License Key** visibility if masked
  - **⌘D** - Delete the selected License
  - **⌘G** - View the **Butterfly Collector** User Guide
  - **⇧⌘D** - Duplicate the selected License
  - **⌘S** - Save the currently selected License entry
  - **⇧⌘C** - Copy the license key of the currently selected License (if one is present)
  - **⌘F** - Focus the Search License field
  - **⇧⌘↑** - Jump to first License entry
  - **⇧⌘↓** - Jump to last License entry
  - **⌘I** - Show **License Analytics**
  - **⌘E** - Show **Expired Licenses** (if there are any)
  - **⌘Q** - Quit **Butterfly Collector**
21. **Save Changes Button:** Clicking this button will apply any changes you have made. Upon clicking, **Butterfly Collector** will also play a subtle clicking sound to further reinforce that the entry has been updated.

**NOTE:** You can also use **⌘S** keyboard shortcut to save a License entry.

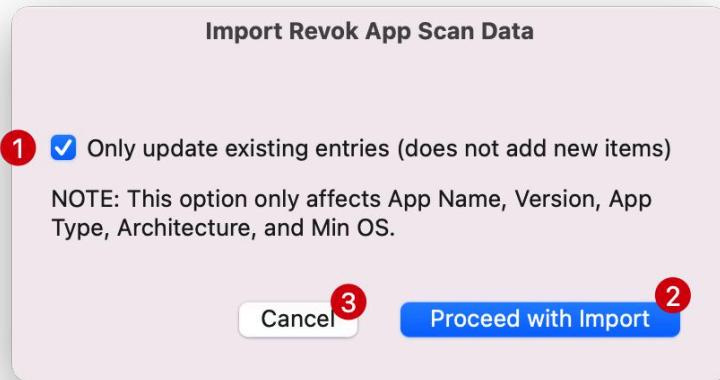
# The Butterfly Collector Menu Bar Options

**Butterfly Collector** also supports a number of program functions that are accessed via the menu bar and they will be covered here:

## File Menu

- **Import from a Revok App Scan CSV...** - This menu allows you to quickly populate your Butterfly Collector license database by importing data from my [Revok](#) app scanning program for macOS.

When importing, you will be presented with the **Import Revok App Scan Data** window:



Its purpose is to give you a choice between doing a full import where all of the entries in the **Revok** CSV file will be processed and new License entries are created OR merely updating specific attributes for existing License entries. It has the following options:

1. **Only update existing entries:** Checking this box will only update specific attributes in your License database such as the version number. **It will not add new entries.** This option is ideal if you have a fairly stable number of License entries in **Butterfly Collector** and merely want to keep key attributes updated on a regular basis. For example, when you update

certain applications to new versions. Using this option will only update the following attributes:

Attributes	Rationale
<i>App Name</i>	<i>Changes periodically</i>
<i>App version</i>	<i>Changes with each new release</i>
<i>App Type</i>	<i>Changes rarely, but could change</i>
<i>Architecture</i>	<i>Changes periodically as Intel support gets dropped by macOS</i>
<i>Min OS Version</i>	<i>Changes frequently as developers drop support for OS versions</i>

If this box is not checked, the **Butterfly Collector** will proceed to add entries that may not currently exist in your License database. For any new entries, the following attributes will be populated from **Revok**:

- *App Name*
- *App version*
- *Publisher (if known)*
- *Category (if known)*
- *App Type*
- *App Platform*
- *Architecture*
- *Min OS Version*

**NOTE:** Other attributes may be populated such as **Cost** and **Currency**, but not from **Revok** data. Instead, **Butterfly Collector** will make some assumptions about the data and choose some reasonable default values.

In general, this option is best when initially setting up your **Butterfly Collector** License database and using the **Only update existing entries** option to keep your existing entries updated.

2. **Proceed with Import:** Clicking this button will initiate the import operation. When the process completes, you will see this Alert that summarizes the

outcome and highlights the number of entries imported (new additions), how many were updated, and how many were skipped. The following image illustrates the typical output when using the **Only update existing entries** option:



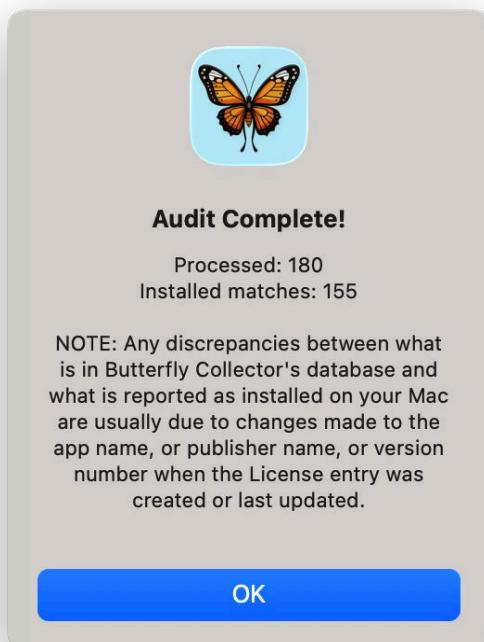
3. **Cancel Button:** Clicking this button will abort the Import process before any changes are made.

Any exported CSV from **Revok**, including filtered views, can be used for license imports. For example, only apps downloaded from the App Store, for example: **Revok\_App\_Scanner\_Report\_AppStore\_09272025\_094349.csv**

The following video will illustrate the process of using Revok to seed your license database: [https://www.widgetworx.com/resources/revok\\_import\\_video.mp4](https://www.widgetworx.com/resources/revok_import_video.mp4)

**NOTE:** This option can import and populate up to 3,072 entries if you're using the licensed version of **Butterfly Collector**. Otherwise, you are limited to 30.

- **Audit installed Applications...** - Selecting this option allows you to run a scan that compares the contents of **Butterfly Collector's** license database with the apps currently installed in your Mac's Applications folder.



This capability allows you to track applications that are licensed but not currently installed, so you can remove them from **Butterfly Collector's** database or re-install them on your Mac.

**NOTE:** This option is generally pretty good at identifying deltas between what's installed on your Mac and what's in **Butterfly Collector**. When there are discrepancies, they typically occur when the installed application was recently updated but the app version in **Butterfly Collector** is older or when a specific attribute such as the publisher name differs from what is used by the app. For example, changing it to "Microsoft" when the official name is "Microsoft Corporation", etc.

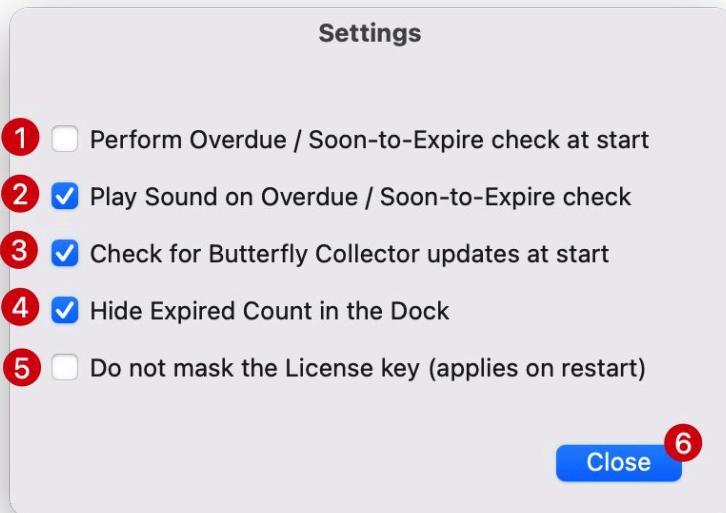
- **Export Licenses as a CSV...** - Selecting this option allows you to export all of your **Butterfly Collector** software license data as a CSV file to the location of your choice.
- **Export Licenses as JSON...** - Selecting this option allows you to export all of your **Butterfly Collector** software license data as a JSON file to the location of your choice.
- **Export the License Database...** - Selecting this option allows you to export a copy of your **Butterfly Collector** database file to the location of your choice, which can be used to restore critical information should you need to recover from

accidental deletions and so on. For more information on how to do this, [please review this section](#).

- **Delete all Licenses from the Database...** - Choosing this option will allow you to delete all of the software licenses currently entered into **Butterfly Collector**. Because this is a very destructive option, you will be prompted to confirm before proceeding:



- **Settings...** This item allows you to configure some additional **Butterfly Collector** program options:



1. **Perform Overdue / Soon-to-Expire check at start:** **Butterfly Collector** has the ability to check all of your licenses to see if they're *overdue* (past their **expiration**) or are *upcoming* (their **expirations** within 30 days) whenever it starts up. Checking this option will turn this feature on to automatically run a check when you start the program. This option is enabled by default.
2. **Play Sound on Overdue / Soon-to-Expire check:** Selecting this option will play a chime whenever the **Overdue / Soon-to-Expire** check is performed. This option is enabled by default.
3. **Check for Butterfly Collector updates at start:** This option can automatically check for a program update whenever the program starts. This option is disabled by default.
4. **Hide Expired Count in the Dock:** This option removes the **Expired License** count that appears in the Dock if one or more of your licenses have expired. This option is disabled by default.
5. **Do not mask the License key:** This option removes the masking (\*\*\*\*\*\*) that appears in the License Key field. This option is disabled by default.

## Automatic Database Backups

**Butterfly Collector** will automatically create License database backups each time you use and then quit the program. Up to three backups will be stored and timestamped in your **~/Library/Application Support/BC\_Backups** folder as illustrated below:



If they are ever needed, you can rename any one of them to **bc\_licenses.db** and restore your License database using [these instructions](#).

## Housekeeping Menu

- **Use Touch ID to access sensitive data** - This option is only available on MacBook Air, MacBook Pro, and Macs that use a recent Apple Magic keyboard and a finger print currently defined.

When this option is selected, you will be prompted to authenticate if you attempt to access the following program options and features:

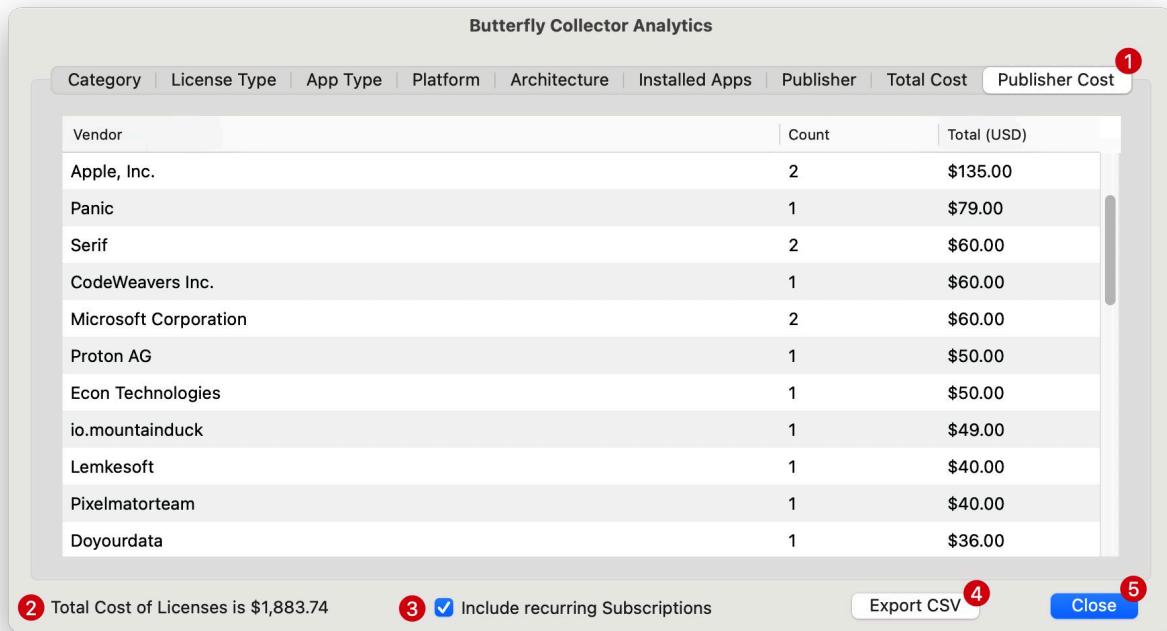
- *Saving changes to a given License entry*
- *Toggling License Key field visibility*
- *Copying the contents of the License Key field via the Copy button*
- *Export Licenses to a CSV file*
- *Export Licenses to a JSON file*
- *Exporting the Licenses Database*
- *Sharing a License entry*
- *Deleting a specific License entry*
- *Deleting all Licenses from the Database*

If you attempt to access **any** of these options, you will be prompted to authenticate using your Mac's Touch ID:



**NOTE:** Once you have authenticated using the Touch ID, **Butterfly Collector** will not prompt you again until the next session.

- **Show License Analytics...** - Selecting this menu will display some basic analytics about your current **Butterfly Collector** software licenses. For example, you can view breakdowns of your licenses grouped by the number and percentages:



The screenshot shows the 'Butterfly Collector Analytics' window. At the top, there are tabs: Category (highlighted in blue), License Type, App Type, Platform, Architecture, Installed Apps, Publisher, Total Cost, and Publisher Cost. A red circle with the number 1 is positioned above the Publisher Cost tab. The main content is a table with the following data:

Vendor	Count	Total (USD)
Apple, Inc.	2	\$135.00
Panic	1	\$79.00
Serif	2	\$60.00
CodeWeavers Inc.	1	\$60.00
Microsoft Corporation	2	\$60.00
Proton AG	1	\$50.00
Econ Technologies	1	\$50.00
io.mountainduck	1	\$49.00
Lemkesoft	1	\$40.00
Pixelmatorteam	1	\$40.00
Doyourdata	1	\$36.00

At the bottom, there are several buttons: 'Total Cost of Licenses is \$1,883.74' (red circle 2), 'Include recurring Subscriptions' (red circle 3), 'Export CSV' (red circle 4), and 'Close' (red circle 5).

1. **Analytics Attribute Tabs:** Currently, you can choose from **Category**, **License Type**, **App Type** (e.g., Desktop vs Menu Bar apps), **Platform** (e.g., macOS vs Windows), **Architecture** (Apple Silicon vs Intel x64, etc.), **Installed Apps** (displays if apps in your **Butterfly Collector** database are also installed on your Mac), **Publisher** (Microsoft, Inc.), and **Total Cost**, and **Publisher Cost** (a breakdown of your license costs by app publisher) analytics:

Each tab contains a breakdown across your licenses broken out by count and percentage.

2. **Total Cost Indicator:** This will display the total cost of all of your licenses, including subscriptions. Subscriptions will calculate totals using the values provided in the **License Interval** field for your software license entries.

For example, if you pay \$10 per month, the total cost for the license will be \$120 (10x12). This line item won't appear if the total sum of your licenses is not greater than zero.

3. **Include recurring Subscriptions:** Checking this box will tally the cost of your recurring license subscriptions based on the time interval (monthly, annually, etc.) and the selected expiration date (as entered in the **Expiration** field) for a given license. For example, if you subscribe to Apple iCloud storage and pay \$2.99 USD per month with the renewal date set in January 2026, it will compute the cost based on the date you are viewing this breakdown.

**NOTE:** This option is only shown when the **Publisher Cost** panel is selected.

## How Total and Publisher Costs are Calculated

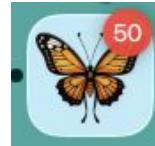
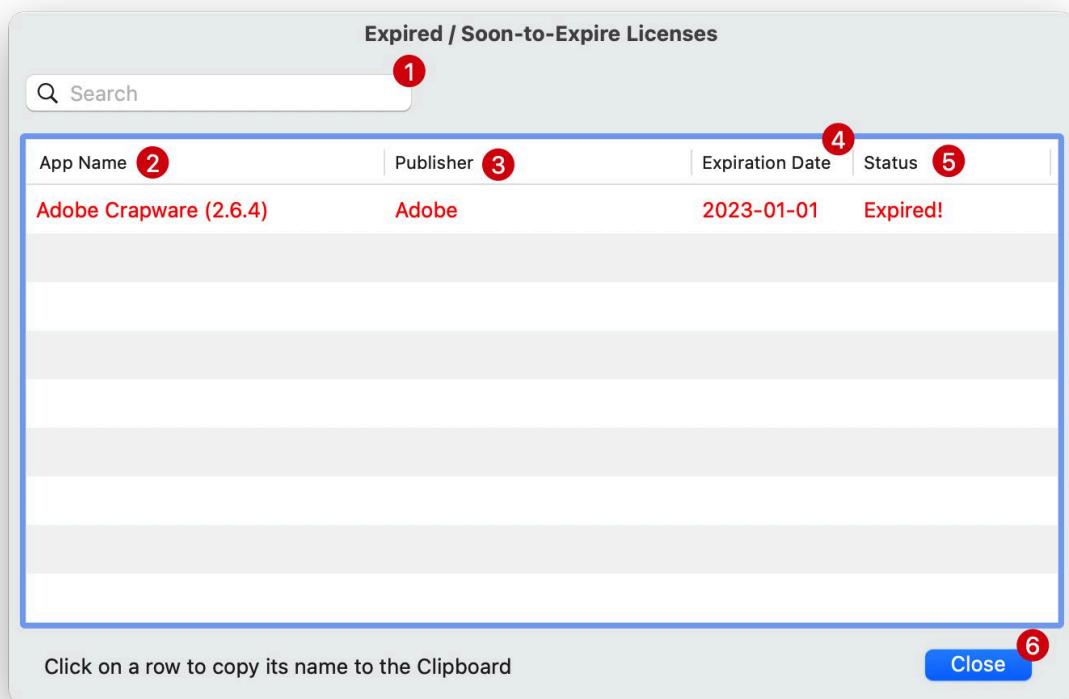
Before you assume any bugs in **Butterfly Collector**, let's explain how the **Total Cost** and **Publisher Cost** breakdowns are calculated:

Scenario	App
License has expired	The app / license entry is ignored
No expiration date	Assumes 12 months (default full-year)
License expires in 2 months	Prorates the cost to 2 months
License expires in 2 years	Caps the license at 12 months
License interval is not recognized	Uses the full license cost as-is

4. **Export CSV Button:** This button allows you to export the contents of the currently selected Analytics tab as a CSV file. The output may resemble the example shown below:

License Type	Count	Percentage
Single version	29	58.00%
Lifetime	21	42.00%

5. **Close Button:** Clicking this button or pressing the **Return key** will close the window. You can also close this window by pressing **ESC**.
- **Show Expired / Soon to Expire Licenses...** - Selecting this option will display a window that highlights any licenses that may have expired. For example:



**NOTE:** A count of expired licenses will be displayed in your Dock whenever you invoke this option unless the **Hide Expired Count in the Dock** Settings option is selected.

1. **Search Field:** This option allows you to search and locate specific apps if there are many displayed. When a match is found, **Butterfly Collector** will highlight it.
2. **App Name:** This displays the software's name and version information (if available). If you click on any row that appears in this window, it will automatically copy the App name to the Mac clipboard.
3. **Publisher:** This displays the software's publisher or distributor name.
4. **Expiration Date:** This displays the expiration date of the software in question.
5. **Status:** This displays several possible status regarding the expiration of a given software licence:
  - a. **Expired!**: The license has expired and it's up to you to renew it.
  - b. **Expires Today**: The license will expire at some point during the current date (i.e., the same day you're viewing this window).
  - c. **Expires in *N* days**: Here, *N* can be between 1 and 7 calendar days.

**NOTE:** Licenses that have expired will appear in red.

6. **Click on expired app:** Selecting any software that appears in this table will automatically copy its name (sans version number) to the Mac's clipboard.
7. **Close Button:** Clicking this button will close the **Expired Licenses** window. You can also close this window by pressing **ESC**.

**NOTE:** **Butterfly Collector** will check for expired licenses when it first starts and on-demand via the **⌘E** keyboard shortcut.

If there are no expired licenses, then **Butterfly Collector** will display the following message:



- **Register Butterfly Collector...** - Select this option to register for the **Butterfly Collector** program.
- **Read the Butterfly Collector User Guide** - Select this option to read a copy of the document you are (hopefully) currently reading.
- **Check for Updates** - Choosing this option will check to see if there is a new update for **Butterfly Collector**. It will give you an option to download the file if a new version is available.

## Getting Licenses into Butterfly Collector

Unfortunately, there's no simple way to get licenses into **Butterfly Collector** due to the wide variations in how software license keys are handled. For example, some developers use vendors like Paddle to generate their licenses, while others use their own mechanisms. On top of that, there are differences in how software licenses are formatted — some use different patterns and lengths for their keys while other licenses are not even distributed as keys, but are actually external files that must be added to a program. All of this conspires to make the process of automatic license ingestion virtually impossible to do flawlessly.

To that end, there are ways to make the process at least somewhat easier. Here are three ways to help smooth the process:

1. **Drag apps from your Mac's Applications folder.** **Butterfly Collector** will automatically create a new license entry for any application you drag from your **Application** folder.

The following fields will be automatically populated:

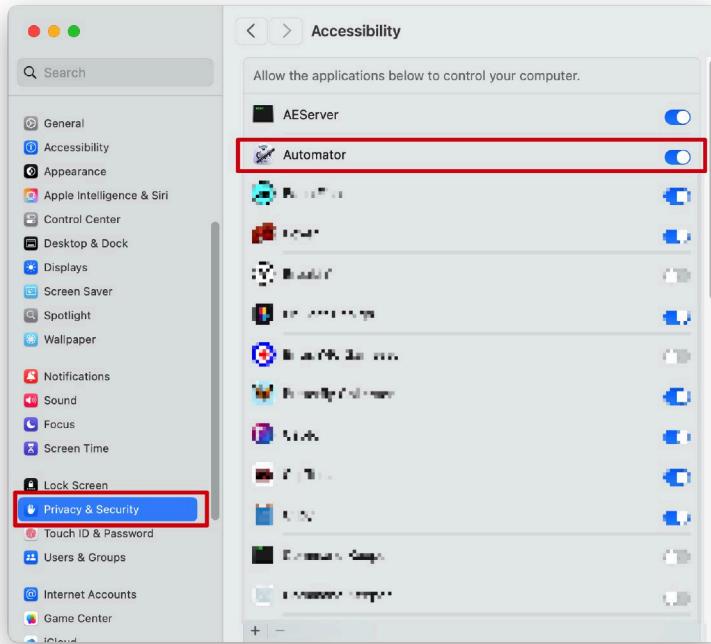
- *App name*
- *App version*
- *App category (if known)*
- *App Type (e.g. Desktop, Menu bar, etc.)*
- *Licensee (it will assume your name, but this can be changed)*
- *Min OS version (if known)*
- *The notes field will have some comments automatically inserted*

The following summarizes the core update logic:

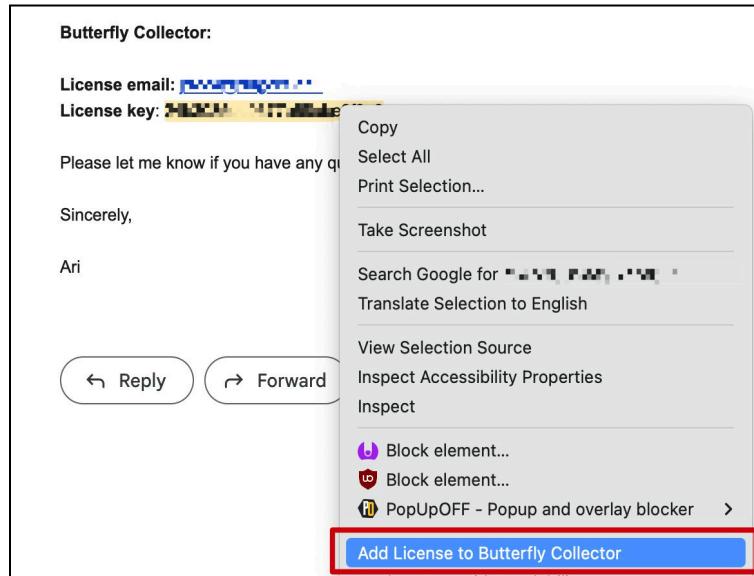
Existing License Entry?	Dragged-In App Version	Action / Result
No	Any	Adds new record
Yes	Higher	Update version only
Yes	Same	Skips
Yes	Lower	Skips

2. Import application metadata from **Revok**, which is described in [detail earlier in this document](#).
3. Use the bundled **Workflow** that's located in the **Butterfly Collector** DMG. The following will describe how to use it:
  1. Copy the workflow **Add to Butterfly Collector.workflow** to your Mac's **~/Library/Services** folder.

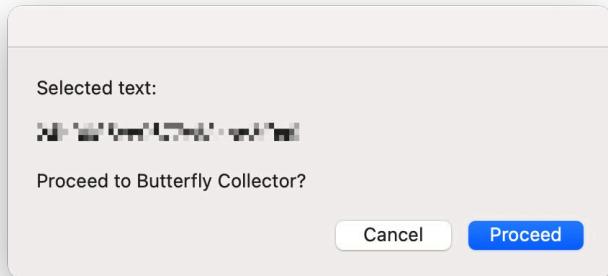
2. Enable Automator (if it's not already enabled) in your Mac's **System Preferences > Privacy & Security > Automator** pane by clicking on the **+** button and selecting it from your **Applications** folder:



3. Find a license and select the text such as a license key, right-click, and choose the **Add License to Butterfly Collector** from the menu (it may also be accessed from the **Services** menu):



3. You will then see a prompt similar to the one below, which displays the text you selected and let's decide if this is correct.



4. If you click on the **Proceed** button, it will start **Butterfly Collector** and instruct you to create a new Licence entry and the text / license key can be pasted in from the clipboard:



# Butterfly Collector and AppleScript

**Butterfly Collector** supports [AppleScript](#) and currently provides five (5) functions, which are documented below:

## AppleScript Dictionary

- **addLicense**: This adds a new license to **Butterfly Collector**. Newly created licenses will appear immediately into the UI.
- **countLicenses**: This returns the current number of licenses as an integer that have been added to **Butterfly Collector**. For example, **50**
- **countExpiredLicenses**: This returns the current number of expired licenses as an integer. For example, **2**.
- **getLicenses**: This returns a list of licenses currently in the **Butterfly Collector** database. For example, **{"Acorn", "Affinity Designer 2", "Affinity Photo 2", "Affinity Publisher 2"}**.
- **getExpired**: This returns a list of licenses in the **Butterfly Collector** database that are currently expired. For example, **{"Acorn"}**.
- **getCategories**: This returns a list of App Store categories and counts that the **Butterfly Collector** database entries map to. For example, **{"Productivity", "35"}**.
- **getLicenseCost**: This returns a list of license entries in the **Butterfly Collector** database by their cost (using the default system currency) . For example, **{"Adobe Crapware, \$129.99"}**.

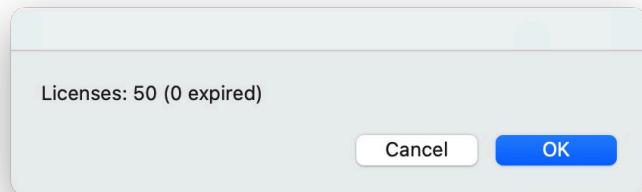
## AppleScript Examples

```
tell application "Butterfly Collector"
    set c1 to countLicenses
    set e1 to countExpiredLicenses
```

```
end tell
```

```
display dialog "Licenses: " & c1 & " (" & e1 & " expired)"
```

Produces...



```
tell application "Butterfly Collector"
    getLicenses
end tell
```

Produces...

```
{"Acorn", "Affinity Designer 2", "Affinity Photo 2", "Affinity
Publisher 2", "App License22", "BetterZip", "Breakin'", "Brilliant.Design", "Butterfly Collector", "Capto", "ChronoSync", "Clearview", "Command Keeper", "CrossOver", "Cyberduck", "DMG Canvas", "Do Your Data Recovery", "Downie 4", "DropDMG", "GraphicConverter 11", "iconStiX", "iShowU Studio 2", "Microsoft Excel", "Microsoft
PowerPoint", "Microsoft Word", "Monodraw", "Mountain Duck"}
```

**NOTE:** The current implementation is somewhat brittle and won't work correctly if you put "blocking" events such as dialogs, Alerts, and such inside the tell / end tell block. Instead, put it outside the main block.

# Troubleshooting Butterfly Collector

## Restoring the Butterfly Collector Database

If you ever delete or otherwise damage your **Butterfly Collector** license data or the entire database, you can restore the data provided you have previously exported the database in the past. To restore the database, follow these steps::

1. Quit **Butterfly Collector**
2. Copy the backup database; usually named something like **XXXXXX\_XXXX\_Licenses\_backup.db** to your **~/Library/Application Support** folder
3. Rename the backup database to **bc\_licenses.db**. If the **Finder** asks you to overwrite the current database, do it
4. Restart **Butterfly Collector**. The desired data should now appear

**NOTE:** **Butterfly Collector** stores all of its data as a standard SQLite3 database, so you are free to query it for your own purposes as long you don't change its schema.

# Version History

- **V1.20 - Released 3 January 2026**

- Added an option to hide the Expired License count in the Dock
- Added an option that makes all license keys visible by default instead of masked
- Added a tool tip that shows the entire license key if it is longer than 30 characters and the field is not masked

- **V1.19 - Released 23 December 2025**

- Improved the delete license function to show the selected app entry
- Added two more AppleScript functions
- Added an Analytics button in the main UI
- Made some internal cleanup and optimizations

- **V1.18 - Released 19 December 2025**

- Added a new “Audit installed Applications” function, which compares the Butterfly Collector database with the apps installed on a user’s Mac
- Added a new “App Installed” field, which lets the user mark if a given app is currently installed on their Mac, the “Audit installed Applications” will automatically set this field
- Added a new filter that lets users filter and show which apps are currently not marked as being installed
- Added a “Installed Apps” analytics feature that shows a list of apps in the Butterfly Collector database and whether they are currently installed or not

- **V1.17 - Released 13 December 2025**

- Added a Share License button that allows you to share a given license via macOS’ Sharing services
- Fixed app name sorting in the list, so apps with lowercase names appear in proper alphabetical order
- Fixed the sorting of the License cost analytics tap

- **V1.16 - Released 4 December 2025**

- Added a new option for calculating the total cost of licenses by Publisher / vendor, which can include the cost of recurring license subscriptions (prorated based on their expiration date)
- Fixed a long-standing bug with the “Add to Calendar” option, which broke when the License had spaces in the title
- **V1.15 - Released 2 December 2025**
  - Added a new analytics breakdown, which shows the cost of your licenses by publisher
  - Added support for CNY currency
  - Added some options to disable the Expired license check at start, the Expired license chime, and the program update check
- **V1.14 - Released 28 November 2025**
  - Fixed a long-standing bug where linefeeds and carriage returns in the Notes field were not preserved
  - Added support for Apache 2.0, BSL 1.1, ISC license types, Mobile App to App type, and iOS and Android to the App Platform fields
  - Increased the number of supported licenses to 3,072
  - Increased the size of file attachments to 5 megs (from 2 megs)
- **V1.13 - Released 5 November 2025**
  - Improved the search and added new indexes to improve search performance
  - Added support for BSD licenses and Online Service to App type
  - Added analytics breakdowns for apps by publisher/vendor
  - Fixed a bug where dragging over more than N apps (e.g. > 100) would crash Butterfly Collector; it now batches files dragged over
  - Patched a loophole where unregistered users could drag over more than 30 files; drag and drop won't be supported for unregistered users
- **V1.12 - Released 24 October 2025**
  - Fixed the drag and drop logic to only update the version number if the app already exists and the version number is higher than what's in the database
- **V1.11 - Released 18 October 2025**

- You can close the Analytics and Overdue/Upcoming Task windows with the ESC key
- Additional fields will be pre-populated when dragging a program from the Applications folder
- Made various database optimizations

- **V1.10 - Released 14 October 2025**

- Added the ability to drag Applications into Butterfly Collector to create new license entries

- **V1.09 - Released 14 October 2025**

- Optimized the database to handle more licenses (2048) and improve performance
- Added a search field to the Expired / soon to expire license window
- Fixed a bug with the macOS Calendar entry, which now creates a proper Reminder
- Changed the Dock behavior so expired licenses or soon-to-expire licenses appear in the Dock rather than just a raw count

- **V1.08 - Released 7 October 2025**

- Added support for AppleScript with 5 commands
- Improved search, so it now also will search the app category
- Right-clicking a selected License can also delete it

- **V1.07 - Released 4 October 2025**

- Added Filter buttons for expired / soon-to-be expired licenses and ones with attachments
- Added support for a custom Workflow / service to help get licenses into Butterfly Collector

- **V1.06 - Released 2 October 2025**

- Changed the import of Revok CSV files to give users a choice between incremental updates of existing Licence entries or a full import
- Added support for automatic License database backups

- **V1.05 - Released 29 September 2025**

- Improved the Expired Licenses window, so it now shows soon-to-expire software licenses
- Fixed the display of the License Type menu, so the date field and Add to Calendar options are exposed for the appropriate licenses by default
- Improved the Total Cost calculation in the Analytics window, so it factors in the expiration date of the license in the total
- **V1.04 - Released 28 September 2025**
  - Added CSV export capabilities to the License Analytics tab
  - Added support for 17 more currencies when creating or editing a License entry
  - Added keyboard shortcuts for saving License entry and focusing the License search field
  - Increased the file attachment size to 2 MB (from 1 MB)
- **V1.03 - Released 27 September 2025**
  - Fixed a nasty bug with the CSV importer due to my recent schema change
  - Added keyboard shortcuts for jumping to the first and last license entries
- **V1.02 - Released 26 September 2025**
  - Added the ability to select a custom price / cost currency field, which is also exported in CSV and JSON exports
  - Added the ability to check for program updates
  - If Touch ID authentication is enabled, it now will prompt you when attempting to delete and save entries
  - Added a few more safe guards, such as preventing duplicate entries and requiring expiration dates for subscriptions
  - Improved the display of currency formatting
- **V1.01 - Released 25 September 2025**
  - Added support for Touch ID authentication
  - Added analytics for licenses by CPU architecture
  - Added analytics for licenses by cost
  - Made a few minor optimizations

- **V1.00 - Released 25 September 2025**

- Initial release