

Chapter 1 : The Lifecycle of a Butterfly

The Lifecycle of a Butterfly. Butterflies go through a life cycle. A butterfly has four stages in its life cycle. Each stage is different. Each stage also has a different goal. A butterfly becoming an adult is called metamorphosis. The life cycle process can take a month to year. It depends on the type of butterfly. Stage 1: Eggs. In the first stage a girl butterfly lays eggs.

There are many different kinds of butterflies. Here are some different kinds: This is the most known butterfly in North America. This butterfly has orange and black wings. In the fall they go to Mexico. Also called the thistle butterfly. This butterfly is everywhere in North America. The wings are orange and brown. The tips of its wings have black and white spots. This butterfly is the same color as a Monarch. But it is smaller than a monarch. This butterfly is everywhere in the United States. This type of butterfly has many different colors. The top of the wings are blue. There are small red and white dots on the tops of the wings. The bottoms of its wings are a red and brown color. It also has orange spots. This butterfly flies fast. It is hard to catch. They like to sit on rotting fruit. They also like to sit in gardens. This butterfly is seen in the United States. It is also in some places in Mexico. This butterfly is brown and orange. It also has patterns on its wings. These patterns look like eyes. These are used to scare off predators. This scares off other animals because it does not look like a butterfly. This butterfly has black and white stripes. It also likes the warm weather. It lives in Mexico and the United States. These butterflies eat pollen. They also live longer than many other kinds of butterflies. Fun Facts about Butterflies Butterflies taste with their feet. Butterflies do not have mouths. Butterflies need sun to fly. Butterflies fly during the day. Butterflies can see some colors. They can see red, yellow, and green. Butterflies cannot fly if they are too cold. They need to be warm to fly. Butterflies have their skeleton on the outside of their body. This is to protect them. It keeps the water inside of their body. This is good because they do not dry out. The wings of a butterfly are transparent. The wings of a butterfly have tiny scales. These give their wings color. This is why they do not look transparent to us.

Chapter 2 : Butterfly Life Cycle - The Academy of Natural Sciences of Drexel University

The caterpillar (or larva) is the long, worm-like stage of the butterfly or moth. It often has an interesting pattern of stripes or patches, and it may have spine-like hairs. It is the feeding and growth stage.

Life Cycle The Life Cycle of a Monarch Butterfly Before a butterfly can flap its wings, it starts out as something completely different and transforms itself through four stages. First as an egg, then as a caterpillar, next as a pupa in its chrysalis, and finally, it emerges as a butterfly. This entire process takes about four weeks from start to finish; although the warmer it is, the shorter the cycle.

Egg A butterfly begins as an egg, laid on the underside of a milkweed leaf. A female Monarch will lay one egg at a time, up to ! They lay so many because only about one in 20 make it to adulthood.

Caterpillar Inside the egg grows a caterpillar, or larva, and there are five parts to this stage, which are known as Instars. The first bite of milkweed is a dangerous one, because milkweed latex can act like glue. Some caterpillars die from that first meal because their mouths gum up. If it survives, the caterpillar then takes a break to shed or molt its skin. The caterpillar is bigger and its colours are more vibrant. Its tentacles grow longer. At this stage, caterpillars can eat a whole leaf in under an hour! It has to hold onto the silk button while slipping the rest of its skin off. Once this happens, the caterpillar becomes a pupa.

Pupa The pupa, or chrysalis, is soft at first but in about an hour, the shell hardens to protect the growing butterfly within. The pupa has no eyes, antennae or legs but inside a complete metamorphosis is going on. The mouth changes from what the caterpillar needed to chew milkweed leaves into a straw-like tongue that the butterfly will need to sip nectar from flowers. And it grows wings! All in just about two weeks.

Butterfly Finally, the shell bursts open and a butterfly emerges. It takes a couple of hours before it can fly because its wings are tiny, wet and wrinkly. The butterfly pumps body fluid, called hemolymph, into the wings to make them grow big and strong. The butterfly flies off in search of its first meal, which it will slurp up through its straw-like tongue, or proboscis. It is a somewhat puzzling concept to wrap your mind around, but it takes generations of monarchs to make the journey north from Texas to southern Canada but only 1 generation to make the entire trip south to Mexico. The northern generations of monarchs only live weeks on average as they follow the milkweed bloom – a plant they lay their eggs on and the only plant that caterpillars will eat. The generation that makes the longest leg of the migration south to Mexico, where it rests for months, will make the final short leg to Texas to complete the cycle, is known by scientists as the migratory generation. In order to make the long journey they must conserve energy. After their long journey south, they overwinter in Mexico for several months in oyamel evergreen trees set high in a few isolated peaks in the cool Sierra Madre mountain range.

The Milkweed Plant Named for its milky juice, more than varieties of milkweed exist, and most are poisonous to many animals – but not to Monarchs. Female Monarchs normally lay one egg per milkweed leaf. As they grow, caterpillars fill themselves with milkweed poison. It stays in their orange and black wings, as a reminder to predators that they taste bitter. A perennial that generally blooms between May and August, milkweed plants prefer soil that is rocky, sandy, and clay. They are hardy and beautiful plants, and as butterfly breeding grounds, will enhance your home garden with their bright flowers along with the natural magnificence of the butterflies that will rest there. Some farmers consider milkweed a nuisance, but it is essential to the survival of the Monarchs.

Chapter 3 : How Does a Caterpillar Turn into a Butterfly? - Scientific American

Ready for the lowdown on one of nature's most beautiful insects? Then check out our butterfly life cycle facts! We all love butterflies for their beautiful, brightly-coloured wings.

All butterflies have "complete metamorphosis. Each stage has a different goal - for instance, caterpillars need to eat a lot, and adults need to reproduce. Depending on the type of butterfly, the life cycle of a butterfly may take anywhere from one month to a whole year. You can print out this Butterfly Life Cycle coloring page to follow along as we talk about the 4 stages. The Egg Butterfly Eggs on a Leaf A butterfly starts life as a very small, round, oval or cylindrical egg. The coolest thing about butterfly eggs, especially monarch butterfly eggs, is that if you look close enough you can actually see the tiny caterpillar growing inside of it. Some butterfly eggs may be round, some oval and some may be ribbed while others may have other features. The egg shape depends on the type of butterfly that laid the egg. Butterfly eggs are usually laid on the leaves of plants, so if you are actively searching for these very tiny eggs, you will have to take some time and examine quite a few leaves in order to find some. The Larva Caterpillar Butterfly Caterpillar When the egg finally hatches, most of you would expect for a butterfly to emerge, right? Butterfly larvae are actually what we call caterpillars. Caterpillars do not stay in this stage for very long and mostly, in this stage all they do is eat. When the egg hatches, the caterpillar will start his work and eat the leaf they were born onto. This is really important because the mother butterfly needs to lay her eggs on the type of leaf the caterpillar will eat – each caterpillar type likes only certain types of leaves. Since they are tiny and can not travel to a new plant, the caterpillar needs to hatch on the kind of leaf it wants to eat. Caterpillars need to eat and eat so they can grow quickly. When a caterpillar is born, they are extremely small. When they start eating, they instantly start growing and expanding. From the outside of the pupa, it looks as if the caterpillar may just be resting, but the inside is where all of the action is. Inside of the pupa, the caterpillar is rapidly changing. Monarch Caterpillar Becoming a Chrysalis Now, as most people know, caterpillars are short, stubby and have no wings at all. Adult Butterfly Butterfly Emerging from a Chrysalis Finally, when the caterpillar has done all of its forming and changing inside the pupa, if you are lucky, you will get to see an adult butterfly emerge. When the butterfly first emerges from the chrysalis, both of the wings are going to be soft and folded against its body. This is because the butterfly had to fit all its new parts inside of the pupa. Watch a Monarch Hatching As soon as the butterfly has rested after coming out of the chrysalis, it will pump blood into the wings in order to get them working and flapping – then they get to fly. Usually within a three or four-hour period, the butterfly will master flying and will search for a mate in order to reproduce. When in the fourth and final stage of their lives, adult butterflies are constantly on the look out to reproduce and when a female lays their eggs on some leaves, the butterfly life cycle will start all over. These kids got to observe live Painted Lady caterpillars turn into Butterflies. There are many different ways that you can catch this miracle happen right before your eyes, for instance, there are live butterfly kits that come with caterpillars so you can see this amazing transformation right in front of you! One of the greatest things about these live butterfly kits is the fact that after the butterflies hatch out of their pupas, you can observe them for a little while and then let them go! Letting your butterflies go is not only a satisfying experience but it is one that is very important to teach your children. Children have to learn that animals do not need to be locked up and while it is okay to observe them sometimes, it is always best to let nature take its course. This amazing life cycle is a great lesson for anyone to learn and it is not only a lesson that involves an ever-changing insect, but it is one that we can apply to ourselves as well. For instance, when a child is feeling down on themselves, you can explain to them that not only do people change inside every day, but insects like the butterfly do too. The butterfly life cycle is a great story to tell anyone and everyone and it is even better to observe it happen right in front of you. Live butterfly kits allow you to see for yourself the entire life cycle of this incredible creature and allows your children to learn more and more about these beautiful insects! Our articles are free for you to copy and distribute. Make sure to give www.

Chapter 4 : How Long Do Butterflies Live?

A butterfly starts life as a very small, round, oval or cylindrical egg. The coolest thing about butterfly eggs, especially monarch butterfly eggs, is that if you look close enough you can actually see the tiny caterpillar growing inside of it.

Thank you for your input. Standards No standards associated with this content. No standards associated with this content. Which set of standards are you looking for? Introduction 20 minutes Draw a KWL chart on the board. Ask students what they already know about the life cycle of a butterfly. Fill in the "K" column. Ask students what they would like to learn about the life cycle of a butterfly and fill in the "W" column. Pick out key words from the song, such as butterfly, caterpillar, chrysalis, and egg. Include a picture and a simple definition for each word. Ask students to identify each. During the reading, make quick pauses to check for understanding about the concepts in the book. Have the students share with the class about any connection they might have between the text and any real world events. Discuss with the class what information is really important to remember, and what other details are not needed in this lesson. Independent working time Pass out the Life Cycle of a Butterfly worksheet and have students complete it independently. Give students the Draw the Life Cycle of a Butterfly worksheet to complete during independent working time. Give students the Color the Life Cycle: Butterfly worksheet to complete during independent working time. Review and closing 10 minutes Go through the KWL chart on the board and check off things in the "W" column that the class achieved in learning today. Add items to the "L" column to show students what they learned today. Review the life stages of a butterfly as you do this. Related learning resources Worksheet Life Science Learning: Life Cycle of a Frog Has your child learned about the life cycle of a frog in school? Test his understanding with this cute cut and paste worksheet.

Chapter 5 : Life cycle of the Butterfly

Read Butterfly Books. Books like The Very Hungry Caterpillar will teach your kids about the butterfly life cycle in a fun, colorful way. After you have read a couple of butterfly books with your kids take a moment to explain about the four stages of a butterfly.

The Very Hungry Caterpillar by Eric Carle 1 set of butterfly life cycle pictures colored, mounted, and laminated Class set of the 4 pictures from www. Tell students that it is the story of a very hungry caterpillar that has something very special happen to him. After reading the story, explain that there are four stages that a caterpillar goes through to become a butterfly. These stages are called metamorphosis, which means change. Show the students the four laminated pictures in order as you explain the life cycle. The egg becomes a larva which is the caterpillar. The caterpillar then becomes a pupa and wraps itself in a chrysalis where it grows into a butterfly. Tell students that sometimes a chrysalis can be found hanging from the underside of a leaf. When it is ready to fly, the butterfly chews its way out. After drying its wings in the sun, the butterfly flies away.

Activity The students will use their bodies to demonstrate what metamorphosis looks like. First, tell them they will become an egg. Have them sit on the floor, grasp their knees, and tuck their head under. Next, tell the students they will change into caterpillars by stretching out on the floor and wriggling. After that, they will stand very still and cross their arms tightly across their chest to look like the chrysalis. Finally, demonstrate how a butterfly gently stretches its wings and begins to flutter. Allow the students to fly around the room as butterflies in the rain forest. Depending on the grade level and writing ability, have students write or copy an explanation of the process of metamorphosis below the illustration on each page. After creating a cover, the students will arrange their pictures in the correct order and staple them together with the cover to make a booklet of the life cycle of a butterfly. What species is this? Click the image to find out!

Chapter 6 : Monarch butterfly - Wikipedia

There is an average life span of a butterfly - it is usually about one month. Although the smallest butterflies that you can usually spot feasting on the flowers in your front yard will usually only live about one week.

Monarch Caterpillar Becoming a Chrysalis Monarch Emerging from a Chrysalis The Life Cycle s of a Monarch Butterfly Monarch butterflies go through four stages during one life cycle, and through four generations in one year. The four stages of the monarch butterfly life cycle are the egg, the larvae caterpillar , the pupa chrysalis , and the adult butterfly. The four generations are actually four different butterflies going through these four stages during one year until it is time to start over again with stage one and generation one. In February and March, the final generation of hibernating monarch butterflies comes out of hibernation to find a mate. They then migrate north and east in order to find a place to lay their eggs. This starts stage one and generation one of the new year for the monarch butterfly. In March and April the eggs are laid on milkweed plants. They hatch into baby caterpillars, also called the larvae. It takes about four days for the eggs to hatch. After about two weeks, the caterpillar will be fully-grown and find a place to attach itself so that it can start the process of metamorphosis. It will attach itself to a stem or a leaf using silk and transform into a chrysalis. Although, from the outside, the 10 days of the chrysalis phase seems to be a time when nothing is happening, it is really a time of rapid change. Within the chrysalis the old body parts of the caterpillar are undergoing a remarkable transformation, called metamorphosis, to become the beautiful parts that make up the butterfly that will emerge. The monarch butterfly will emerge from the pupa and fly away, feeding on flowers and just enjoying the short life it has left, which is only about two to six weeks. This first generation monarch butterfly will then die after laying eggs for generation number two. The second generation of monarch butterflies is born in May and June, and then the third generation will be born in July and August. These monarch butterflies will go through exactly the same four stage life cycle as the first generation did, dying two to six weeks after it becomes a beautiful monarch butterfly. The fourth generation of monarch butterflies is a little bit different than the first three generations. The fourth generation is born in September and October and goes through exactly the same process as the first, second and third generations except for one part. The fourth generation of monarch butterflies does not die after two to six weeks. Instead, this generation of monarch butterflies migrates to warmer climates like Mexico and California and will live for six to eight months until it is time to start the whole process over again. It is amazing how the four generations of monarch butterflies works out so that the monarch population can continue to live on throughout the years, but not become overpopulated. Our articles are free for you to copy and distribute. Make sure to give www.

Chapter 7 : Butterfly - Wikipedia

The monarch butterfly will emerge from the pupa and fly away, feeding on flowers and just enjoying the short life it has left, which is only about two to six weeks. This first generation monarch butterfly will then die after laying eggs for generation number two.

Often have metallic spots on wings; often conspicuously coloured with black, orange and blue Biology The wings of butterflies, here *Inachis io* , are covered with coloured scales. General description Further information: Glossary of entomology terms and Comparison of butterflies and moths Unlike butterflies, most moths like *Laothoe populi* fly by night and hide by day. These scales give butterfly wings their colour: The thorax is composed of three segments, each with a pair of legs. In most families of butterfly the antennae are clubbed, unlike those of moths which may be threadlike or feathery. The long proboscis can be coiled when not in use for sipping nectar from flowers. Some day-flying moths, such as the hummingbird hawk-moth , [15] are exceptions to these rules. They have cylindrical bodies, with ten segments to the abdomen, generally with short prolegs on segments 3 and 10; the three pairs of true legs on the thorax have five segments each. The pupa or chrysalis, unlike that of moths, is not wrapped in a cocoon. Most butterflies have the ZW sex-determination system where females are the heterogametic sex ZW and males homogametic ZZ. Lepidoptera migration , Insect migration , and Animal navigation Butterflies are distributed worldwide except Antarctica, totalling some 18, species. It is not clear how it dispersed; adults may have been blown by the wind or larvae or pupae may have been accidentally transported by humans, but the presence of suitable host plants in their new environment was a necessity for their successful establishment. Many butterflies, such as the painted lady , monarch, and several danaine migrate for long distances. These migrations take place over a number of generations and no single individual completes the whole trip. The eastern North American population of monarchs can travel thousands of miles south-west to overwintering sites in Mexico. There is a reverse migration in the spring. They can see polarized light and therefore orient even in cloudy conditions. The polarized light near the ultraviolet spectrum appears to be particularly important. Many species have long larval life stages while others can remain dormant in their pupal or egg stages and thereby survive winters. The number of generations per year varies from temperate to tropical regions with tropical regions showing a trend towards multivoltinism. Courtship is often aerial and often involves pheromones. Butterflies then land on the ground or on a perch to mate. Simple photoreceptor cells located at the genitals are important for this and other adult behaviours. In the genera *Colias* , *Erebia* , *Euchloe* , and *Parnassius*, a small number of species are known that reproduce semi-parthenogenetically ; when the female dies, a partially developed larva emerges from her abdomen. This is lined with a thin coating of wax which prevents the egg from drying out before the larva has had time to fully develop. Each egg contains a number of tiny funnel-shaped openings at one end, called micropyles; the purpose of these holes is to allow sperm to enter and fertilize the egg. Butterfly eggs vary greatly in size and shape between species, but are usually upright and finely sculptured. Some species lay eggs singly, others in batches. Many females produce between one hundred and two hundred eggs. As it hardens it contracts, deforming the shape of the egg. This glue is easily seen surrounding the base of every egg forming a meniscus. The nature of the glue has been little researched but in the case of *Pieris brassicae* , it begins as a pale yellow granular secretion containing acidophilic proteins. This is viscous and darkens when exposed to air, becoming a water-insoluble, rubbery material which soon sets solid. Each species of butterfly has its own host plant range and while some species of butterfly are restricted to just one species of plant, others use a range of plant species, often including members of a common family. This most likely happens when the egg overwinters before hatching and where the host plant loses its leaves in winter, as do violets in this example. Although most caterpillars are herbivorous, a few species are predators: *Spalgis epius* eats scale insects , [42] while lycaenids such as *Liphyra brassolis* are myrmecophilous , eating ant larvae. They communicate with the ants using vibrations that are transmitted through the substrate as well as using chemical signals. Large blue *Phengaris arion* caterpillars trick *Myrmica* ants into taking them back to the ant colony where they feed on the ant eggs and larvae in a parasitic relationship. Near the end of each stage, the

larva undergoes a process called apolysis, mediated by the release of a series of neurohormones. During this phase, the cuticle, a tough outer layer made of a mixture of chitin and specialized proteins, is released from the softer epidermis beneath, and the epidermis begins to form a new cuticle. At the end of each instar, the larva moults, the old cuticle splits and the new cuticle expands, rapidly hardening and developing pigment. Caterpillars have short antennae and several simple eyes. The mouthparts are adapted for chewing with powerful mandibles and a pair maxillae, each with a segmented palp. Adjoining these is the labium-hypopharynx which houses a tubular spinneret which is able to extrude silk. These prolegs have rings of tiny hooks called crochets that are engaged hydrostatically and help the caterpillar grip the substrate. There is also decoration in the form of hairs, wart-like protuberances, horn-like protuberances and spines. Internally, most of the body cavity is taken up by the gut, but there may also be large silk glands, and special glands which secrete distasteful or toxic substances. The developing wings are present in later stage instars and the gonads start development in the egg stage. At this point the larva stops feeding, and begins "wandering" in the quest for a suitable pupation site, often the underside of a leaf or other concealed location. There it spins a button of silk which it uses to fasten its body to the surface and moults for a final time. While some caterpillars spin a cocoon to protect the pupa, most species do not. The naked pupa, often known as a chrysalis, usually hangs head down from the cremaster, a spiny pad at the posterior end, but in some species a silken girdle may be spun to keep the pupa in a head-up position. The structure of the transforming insect is visible from the exterior, with the wings folded flat on the ventral surface and the two halves of the proboscis, with the antennae and the legs between them. To transform from the miniature wings visible on the outside of the pupa into large structures usable for flight, the pupal wings undergo rapid mitosis and absorb a great deal of nutrients. If one wing is surgically removed early on, the other three will grow to a larger size. In the pupa, the wing forms a structure that becomes compressed from top to bottom and pleated from proximal to distal ends as it grows, so that it can rapidly be unfolded to its full adult size. Several boundaries seen in the adult colour pattern are marked by changes in the expression of particular transcription factors in the early pupa. The surface of both butterflies and moths is covered by scales, each of which is an outgrowth from a single epidermal cell. The head is small and dominated by the two large compound eyes. These are capable of distinguishing flower shapes or motion but not for clearly viewing distant objects. The antennae are composed of many segments and have clubbed tips unlike moths that have tapering or feathery antennae. The sensory receptors are concentrated in the tips and can detect odours. Taste receptors are located on the palps and on the feet. The mouthparts are adapted to sucking and the mandibles are usually reduced in size or absent. The first maxillae are elongated into a tubular proboscis which is curled up at rest and expanded when needed to feed. The first and second maxillae bear palps which function as sensory organs. Some species have a reduced proboscis or maxillary palps and do not feed as adults. Each of the three thoracic segments has two legs among nymphalids, the first pair is reduced and the insects walk on four legs. The second and third segments of the thorax bear the wings. The leading edges of the forewings have thick veins to strengthen them, and the hindwings are smaller and more rounded and have fewer stiffening veins. The forewings and hindwings are not hooked together as they are in moths but are coordinated by the friction of their overlapping parts. The front two segments have a pair of spiracles which are used in respiration. The front eight segments have spiracles and the terminal segment is modified for reproduction. A spermatophore is deposited in the female, following which the sperm make their way to a seminal receptacle where they are stored for later use. In both sexes, the genitalia are adorned with various spines, teeth, scales and bristles, which act to prevent the butterfly from mating with an insect of another species. A newly emerged butterfly needs to spend some time inflating its wings with hemolymph and letting them dry, during which time it is extremely vulnerable to predators. Some also derive nourishment from pollen, [54] tree sap, rotting fruit, dung, decaying flesh, and dissolved minerals in wet sand or dirt. Butterflies are important as pollinators for some species of plants. In general, they do not carry as much pollen load as bees, but they are capable of moving pollen over greater distances. They sip water from damp patches for hydration and feed on nectar from flowers, from which they obtain sugars for energy, and sodium and other minerals vital for reproduction. Several species of butterflies need more sodium than that provided by nectar and are attracted by sodium in salt; they sometimes land on

people, attracted by the salt in human sweat. Some butterflies also visit dung, rotting fruit or carcasses to obtain minerals and nutrients. In many species, this mud-puddling behaviour is restricted to the males, and studies have suggested that the nutrients collected may be provided as a nuptial gift, along with the spermatophore, during mating. Since it usually occurs in species with low population density, it is assumed these landscape points are used as meeting places to find mates. The antennae come in various shapes and colours; the hesperiids have a pointed angle or hook to the antennae, while most other families show knobbed antennae. The antennae are richly covered with sensory organs known as sensillae. Many species show sexual dimorphism in the patterns of UV reflective patches. Some species will bask or perch on chosen perches. The flight styles of butterflies are often characteristic and some species have courtship flight displays. Some species have evolved dark wingbases to help in gathering more heat and this is especially evident in alpine forms. Studies using *Vanessa atalanta* in a wind tunnel show that they use a wide variety of aerodynamic mechanisms to generate force. Butterflies are able to change from one mode to another rapidly. Most wasps are very specific about their host species and some have been used as biological controls of pest butterflies like the large white butterfly. In order to control it, some pupae that had been parasitised by a chalcid wasp were imported, and natural control was thus regained. The species is endangered, and is one of only three insects the other two being butterflies as well to be listed on Appendix I of CITES, making international trade illegal. It is endemic to New South Wales. It has a very limited distribution in the Boambee area.

Chapter 8 : Monarch Butterfly Site: Life Cycle, Migration, Pictures, News, More!

The Life Cycle of a Monarch Butterfly Before a butterfly can flap its wings, it starts out as something completely different and transforms itself through four stages. First as an egg, then as a caterpillar, next as a pupa in its chrysalis, and finally, it emerges as a butterfly.

It is a beautiful and unique sight. Hi everyone, Spring time is a wonderful time of year to dump those boring textbooks and head outside to do some science. Hopefully we have provided you with enough information below to assist you in answering the 20, awkward questions your child has for you!!! They come in different colors and sizes. Scientists classify them under the Order Lepidoptera, together with the moths. If you ever encounter the term Lepidopteran, then you would know that it refers to a butterfly or to a creature with butterfly-like properties. Click here to learn more about the bundle. How does the life cycle of a butterfly begin? Like humans, there are male butterflies and female butterflies. This is the first stage in the life cycle of a butterfly—the egg stage. Some butterflies can lay eggs on different plants but other butterflies can only lay eggs on one specific plant. Outside the chorion is a thin layer of wax for protection against drying. It has a tunnel-shaped opening on one end called the micropyle, where the sperm enters in order to fertilize it. The egg can be spherical or oval, depending on the species of the butterfly. The diapause or rest stage prevents the egg from hatching in the winter and allows the egg stage to extend until spring. Just imagine how the butterfly would fare if it hatches during winter, when there is nothing to eat and it is very cold outside. Therefore, the diapause provides a way for adapting to the weather. The second stage occurs when then the egg hatches and gives rise to the butterfly larva. The plural for larva is larvae and larvae are also known as caterpillars. At this stage, which lasts for several weeks, the larva spends its time eating and sleeping, much like how you were when you were still a baby. Most caterpillars eat plant leaves but a few caterpillars can eat insects. The development of caterpillars involves steps called instars. This process is also called apolysis or molting. The cuticle is made of chitin and other proteins. Instars are important because they allow the caterpillar to grow. The butterfly undergoes about 4 to 6 moltings. What is the third stage? The third stage involves the transformation of the larva into chrysalis or pupa plural pupae. When the larva has grown to its full size, it seeks the right location for pupation. This location is usually the underside of the leaf but can also occur in the stems or nooks on a tree trunk. Therefore, if you want to see an actual pupa, you might want to check under the leaves or in depressions of tree trunks. After the larva molts for the last time, it then surrounds itself with the material that makes up the cocoon. The pupa inside the cocoon is incapable of movement and it is not able to actively hide. Fortunately, it is hard to see the cocoon since its color usually blends with the background environment. During this stage, wings become fully developed. The growth of the wings occurs through the process of mitosis, where there is a rapid production of new cells. Pupation lasts for weeks, upon which the butterfly goes to its last life cycle stage. What is the final stage in the life cycle of a butterfly? The fourth and final stage is the adult stage. An adult butterfly is also known as an imago. The emergence of the adult butterfly from the cocoon is among the most beautiful sights in nature. However, the butterfly cannot fly immediately after coming out of the cocoon. Instead, it spends the first minutes or hours drying its body. This is perhaps the stage when the pupa is most vulnerable to its predators. During this stage, the butterfly already has six legs and four wings—a pair of forewings and another pair of hindwings. When the butterfly is already an adult, it can gather nectar from flowers for its food and reproduce. It can give rise to other beautiful butterflies. This bundle contains a beautiful animation that teaches children about the life cycle of the butterfly, in addition to a separate audio file that can be enjoyed in the car, a storybook book and a coloring book. You can also download our Learn about Animals E-Book which contains Learn about Articles, Coloring sheets and Worksheets for many exciting animals found in this wonderful world we inhabit.

Chapter 9 : Butterfly Life Cycle: Article with Lots of Pictures

Butterfly fossils date to the Paleocene, which was about 56 million years ago. Butterflies have the typical four-stage insect life cycle. Winged adults lay eggs on the food plant on which their larvae, known as caterpillars, will feed. The caterpillars grow, sometimes very rapidly, and when fully developed, pupate in a chrysalis.

Click on any of the parts of the monarch butterfly life cycle to get more details. The stages include, egg, larva, pupa, and adult. The entire process is called complete metamorphosis and is one of two ways insects develop from an egg to an adult. The other type of insect development is called incomplete metamorphosis. Egg A monarch begins life as a single, greenish egg attached to the underside of a milkweed leaf. The worm-like larva grows inside the egg. When it is ready, the larva chews a small hole in the egg shell and wriggles its way into the world. After a few minutes, the newly hatched larva has its first meal -- the remains of its egg. Female monarchs lay one to three eggs on the underside of milkweed leaves. This process is repeated until the female has laid hundreds of eggs. Milkweed is the only plant that monarch larvae will eat. The larva eats and grows, grows and eats. The larva grows so much that it outgrows its skin, much like outgrowing old clothes. In order for the larva to keep growing, molting must occur. The old skin splits, revealing the new skin underneath. The larva wriggles free of the too-tight skin. After freeing itself, the molted larva often eats its old skin before moving on to more milkweed leaves. The last molt is much different than the others. The larva crawls away from its milkweed plant, searching for a suitable place. Some larvae will travel longer distances than others. When the larva has found a suitable place, it weaves a silk mat with a "button" in the center. Once the mat and button are ready, the larva grabs the silk with its legs and hangs upside down. The front part of its body will curve to make a "J-shape. The skin splits behind the head, and the larva wiggles while it hangs upside down to remove the old skin. This final molt is the trickiest, because the larva must shed its old skin and still hang onto the silk button. Once the larva embeds a hook-like structure at its rear end into the button, the rest of the skin can slip off. The monarch has no eyes and no antennae. It has no legs, and it cannot move. All of the major changes in body shape, size, and arrangement happen. In monarchs, this stage can last as long as a week. At the end of this stage, an adult butterfly will emerge from the chrysalis. New wings are small and shriveled, so the butterfly pumps body fluid through its wing veins in order to make them get bigger. Then, the monarch has to wait for air to replace some of the fluid. Until this happens, the monarch cannot fly, and its wings are easily damaged. From this point on, the monarch drinks all of its food. The butterfly will visit several different kinds of flowers to get its nectar dinner. Monarch larvae only eat the leaves of the milkweed plants. Once they become an adult they switch to feeding on the nectar of different plants including milkweed. Not only do adult monarchs need to drink nectar, but like other butterflies they also need to drink water. You can sometimes see them on damp ground where they can get water from the soil. This is called mud-puddling, or puddling. Mating Adult monarchs begin mating in the spring, before they return to their summer range. Female monarchs will generally lay one to as many as three eggs on the underside of milkweed leaves. She does this many times until she has laid hundreds of eggs. These eggs will hatch into larva, pupate, and become adults in the summer. These new adults will also mate. The new females will lay eggs as they fly northward. This cycle repeats throughout the summer. Finally, in September, mating stops. The last generation of the summer is the one that will migrate to the overwintering grounds. Additional images via Wikimedia Commons. Butterfly egg picture by forehead.