

The lifecycle of a butterfly

A tiny egg is laid by the female butterfly after mating, usually in the spring. A Larva develops within the egg which is the butterfly's caterpillar stage. The caterpillar hatches out of the egg feeding on plants during the summer. In the Autumn, the caterpillar stops feeding and makes a chrysalis and develops into a pupa within the chrysalis. Over the next few months the pupa undergoes the process of metamorphosis and develops into a butterfly, breaking out of the chrysalis ready for its first flight.

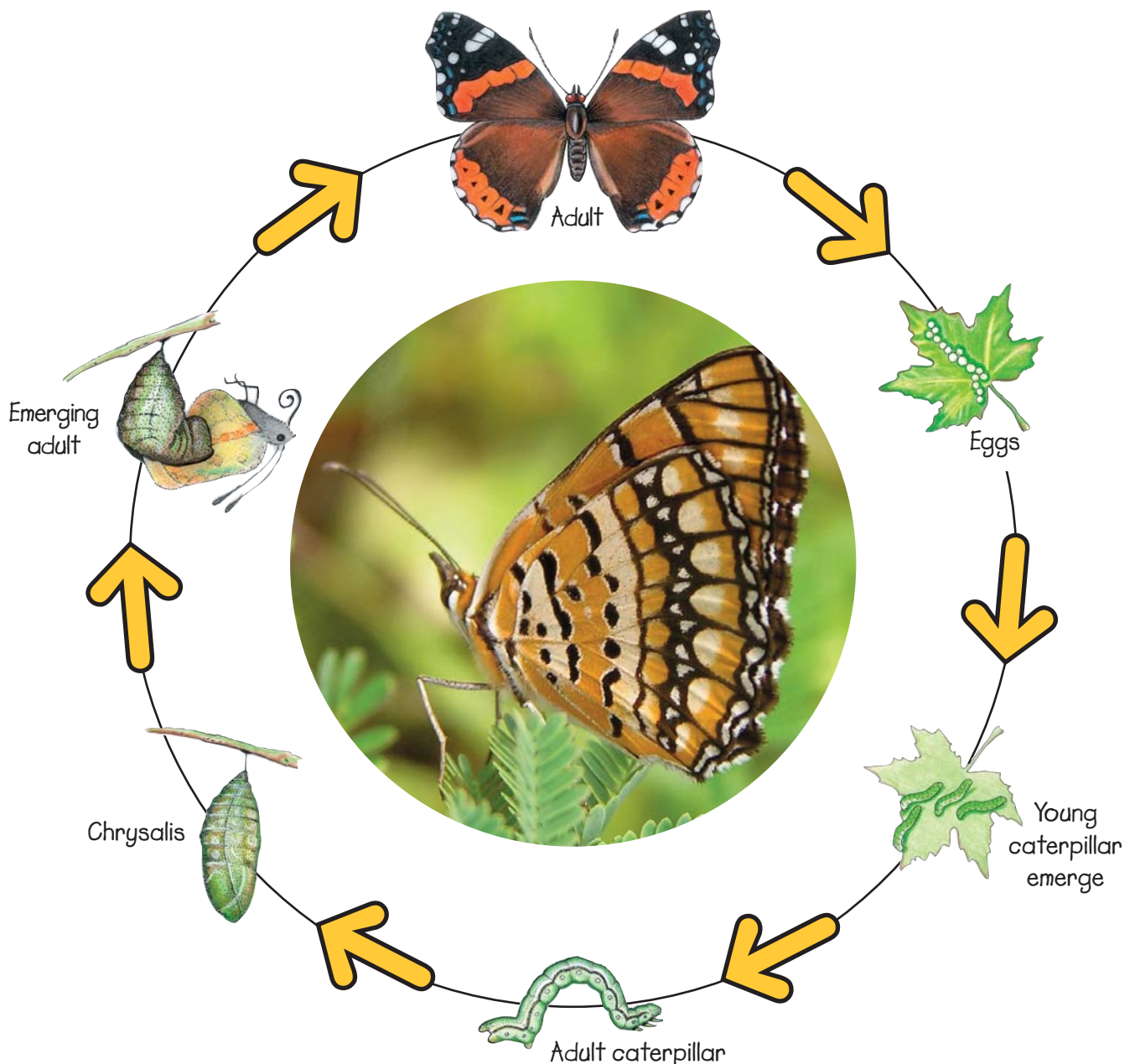
Female butterflies lay tiny eggs on the leaves or stems of the plants the tiny caterpillar offspring will feed on.

The tiny larva caterpillars that emerge from the eggs eat the leaves of the plants where they were born and grow very quickly. They shed their tight skin as they grow, when this old tight skin splits the new fitting skin is revealed underneath.

When the larva caterpillar is fully grown it begins the next stage of its development and attaches itself to a leaf or twig and begins to build a chrysalis which it makes to encase itself. The outer case of this chrysalis is hard and often camouflaged to hide it from predators. Inside the chrysalis, the pupa caterpillar is slowly changing its body shape into that of a butterfly and growing wings, this process which can take a few months is called metamorphosis.

The pupa's case finally splits open and the adult butterfly emerges. The butterfly spreads its wings which at first are soft and need to stiffen. After a little while the butterfly is ready to fly off, find food and a mate, beginning the process all over again.

1. The adult female butterfly lays eggs on the plant.
2. The egg hatches into a larva of the butterfly, a caterpillar. The tiny caterpillar eats and grows.
3. The caterpillar sheds its skin until it is fully grown.
4. The caterpillar attaches itself to a twig or leaf and makes a chrysalis in which it lives.
5. Inside the chrysalis the caterpillar undergoes a complete change developing. Over months into an adult butterfly. This process is called metamorphosis.
6. Finally the chrysalis case splits and the butterfly emerges. It dries its soft wings in the air until it is ready to fly.



Butterfly wordsearch



Can you find the butterfly lifecycle related words in the grid below.
The words can be found horizontally, vertically and diagonally.
Some are written backwards.

M	T	C	S	X	G	G	E	N	T	A	I	S	L	A
N	E	M	T	O	K	S	B	F	Q	P	I	M	H	K
A	S	T	A	G	E	S	V	R	A	L	J	W	T	A
T	K	C	A	B	Y	L	M	H	A	Z	U	S	P	P
M	I	W	Q	M	X	V	D	S	E	A	O	L	Y	U
L	J	U	X	I	O	L	Y	T	G	H	J	M	C	P
I	D	Y	S	N	E	R	P	A	E	V	R	A	L	R
F	U	L	A	O	H	U	P	H	C	K	W	Z	E	A
E	J	F	P	C	J	T	A	H	P	E	A	J	P	X
C	M	R	Z	E	X	Z	R	A	O	V	F	C	I	A
Y	S	E	S	C	F	A	E	L	N	S	V	L	D	D
C	X	T	H	G	O	U	P	H	C	A	I	E	O	N
L	U	T	E	J	N	H	J	M	V	N	K	S	P	V
E	G	U	P	X	A	I	C	K	O	J	P	A	T	K
C	B	B	I	Z	T	L	W	M	R	T	N	C	E	I
Y	A	Q	L	W	T	S	A	B	C	F	H	I	R	H
S	C	A	T	E	R	P	I	L	L	A	R	Q	A	P

Butterfly

Caterpillar

Chrysalis

Egg

Host

Larva

Leaf

Lepidoptera

Lifecycle

Metamorphosis

Moth

Pupa

Stages

Wings