

LIFE CYCLE OF THE
Monarch Butterfly
Danaus plexippus



LIFE CYCLE OF THE
Painted Lady Butterfly
Vanessa cardui



Stages of
 Metamorphosis

- 1 A female butterfly lays an egg on a plant that will be a food source once the egg hatches.
- 2 Egg hatches and caterpillar emerges. The caterpillar is the larval stage of the life cycle.
- 3 Monarch larva eats milkweed leaves while Painted Lady larva eats thistles or daisies. As larva grows it sheds its exoskeleton (old skin) multiple times.
- 4 After about two weeks the larva is fully grown and searches for a place to transform into a chrysalis.
- 5 Larva finds a safe location to attach itself.
- 6 Larva sheds its exoskeleton for the last time and begins to show its cuticle (new skin) as it enters the pupal stage.
- 7 Chrysalis (pupal stage) is fully formed and metamorphosis occurs as the larva turns into a butterfly.
- 8 Adult butterfly becomes visible while still inside the chrysalis.
- 9 Butterfly emerges from the chrysalis and spreads its wings.
- 10 Adult butterfly flies from flower to flower feeding on nectar. Adults mate and then females lay eggs as the cycle begins again.



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