

LIFE CYCLE OF A BUTTERFLY

Complete Metamorphosis Timeline

Days 1 - 7

Stage 1: The Egg

Tiny, round, or oval objects laid on the underside of host plant leaves. The embryo develops inside until it is ready to emerge.

Weeks 2 - 4

Stage 2: The Larva (Caterpillar)

The feeding stage. The caterpillar eats its own eggshell first, then the host plant. It molts (sheds skin) several times as it grows rapidly.

Weeks 5 - 6

Stage 3: The Pupa (Chrysalis)

The transformation stage. The caterpillar spins a silk pad and hardens into a chrysalis. Inside, tissues are broken down and rebuilt into wings, legs, and antennae.

Weeks 7+

Stage 4: The Adult (Imago)

The reproductive stage. The butterfly emerges with wet, crinkled wings. It pumps fluid into the wing veins, dries, and flies off to find a mate.

Observation Notes:

Habitat & Host Plants: