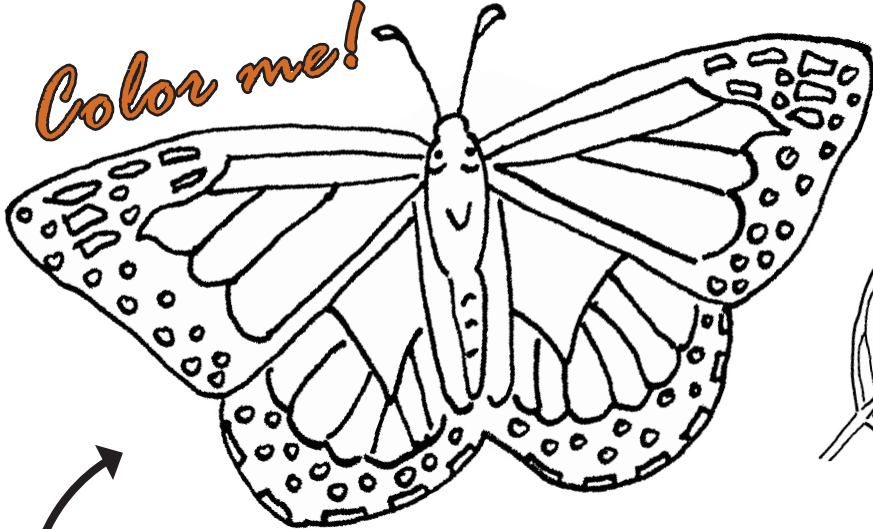
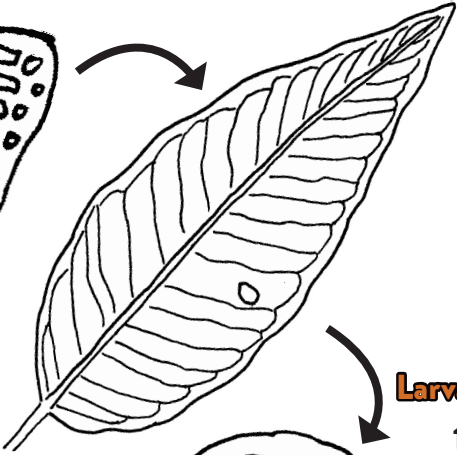


Color me!



Egg | The female butterfly will lay her eggs on a host plant that's suitable food for young caterpillars. For monarchs, their host plant is milkweed.



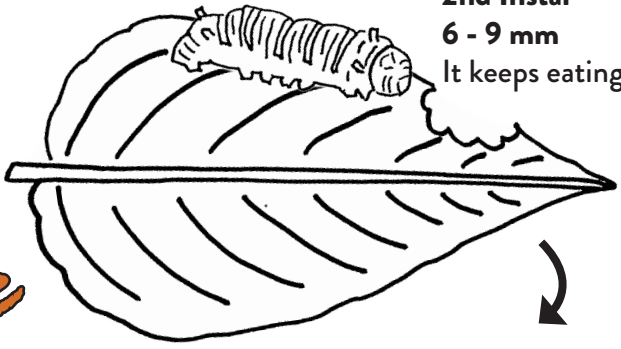
Larval Stage (5 Instars):

1st Instar | 2 - 5 mm
A caterpillar, or larva, will hatch from the egg and begin to eat the leaves of the milkweed. As the caterpillar eats and grows, it becomes too big for its skin and will molt or shed it. The stages between each molt are called instars.

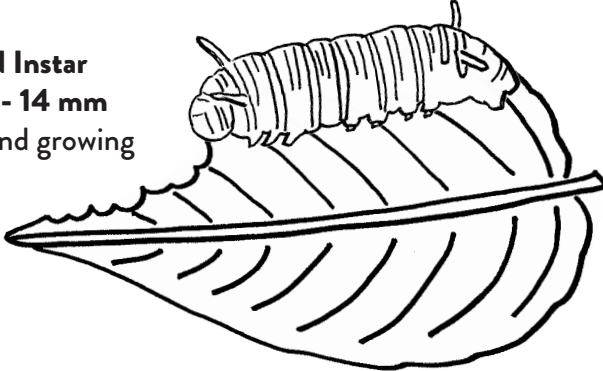


Monarch Life Cycle

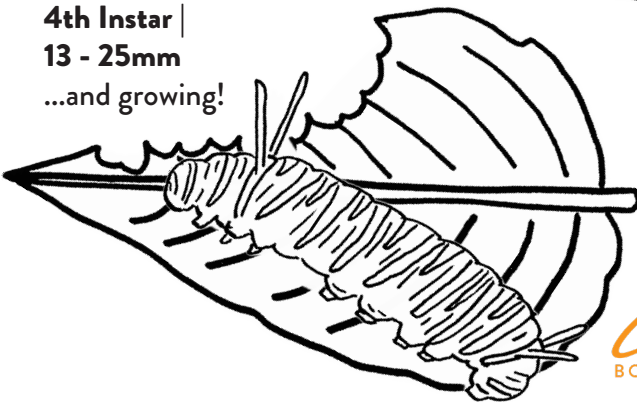
2nd Instar
6 - 9 mm
It keeps eating...



3rd Instar
10 - 14 mm
...and growing

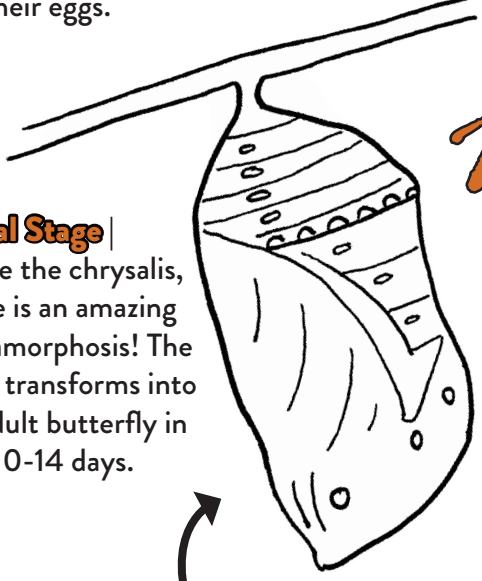


4th Instar |
13 - 25mm
...and growing!



Adult | The adult butterfly will emerge from the chrysalis and begin to search for a new food source - nectar from flowers. As they flutter from flower to flower, females are also looking for milkweed to lay their eggs.

Pupal Stage | Inside the chrysalis, there is an amazing metamorphosis! The larva transforms into an adult butterfly in just 10-14 days.



5th Instar | 25 - 45 mm
In this final instar stage, the caterpillar prepares to find a safe place for the pupal stage. It forms a hard chrysalis, or casing, to protect it as it transforms from a larva into an adult.

