

Butterflies

An Amazing Journey

Have you ever seen a monarch butterfly? Monarchs are known for their beautiful orange, black, and white wings. But they are even more well-known for the long journey they make each year from Canada and the United States all the way down to Mexico. Some Monarchs fly up to 2000 miles!

Monarch Butterflies might be the most famous butterfly because of their long journey. But every butterfly you see is on a journey that started when they were just a tiny little egg.

Butterflies are insects that go through four different stages in their lives - egg, caterpillar, pupa, and adult. There are over 20,000 species of butterflies. All adults have six legs, two antennae, and four wings. They come in an amazing variety of patterns and shapes and can range in size from 1/4 inch to 12 inches.

Butterfly wings are made of a protein called "chitin" that is nearly transparent. You don't see through their wings, though, because they are covered with thousands of tiny, powdery scales, which is what gives butterfly wings all that beautiful color. Those wonderful colors are not only beautiful, however. They are also protective. They help butterflies hide from everything that would like to eat them. Birds, wasps, lizards, toads, and even rats have been known to eat butterflies. Their colorful wings help them avoid predators so they can live long enough to lay their eggs.

Every beautiful butterfly is first a tiny caterpillar born from a tiny egg. Mother butterflies attach their eggs to plants they know their babies can eat, and when those baby caterpillars are born, they are HUNGRY!

Those little caterpillars have one job, and it is to eat. They eat and eat and when they get too big for their skin, it splits open and the bigger caterpillar crawls out. The caterpillar keeps eating and growing until one day, it knows it is time for the next change.

That's when the caterpillar finds a twig, branch, or even a leaf where it feels safe. The caterpillar hangs upside down and forms a hard shell around its body called a chrysalis. At this point, the caterpillar is said to be in the pupal stage.

The pupal stage lasts anywhere from a few days to several weeks, depending on the type of butterfly. But soon, the chrysalis breaks open and slowly, the new butterfly works its way out. It has to work hard to escape the chrysalis and it can't fly right away. In just a little while, its wings begin to dry. The butterfly stretches them out until they are straight and dry.

Soon, the beautiful new butterfly is ready to fly!

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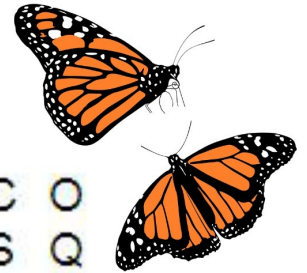
Amazing Facts and Fun

1. _____ butterflies migrate from Canada and the United States all the way to _____ each year.
2. Even the largest butterflies in the world begin life as a tiny _____.
3. The main job of a tiny _____ is to eat lots and lots of leaves so it can grow big.
4. Butterfly wings are made from a protein called _____.
5. There are over 20,000 _____ of butterflies in the world.
6. The beautiful colors and _____ on butterfly wings help them to hide from predators.
7. Many creatures like to eat butterflies - like birds, frogs, and _____.
8. When caterpillars get big enough, they find a safe place, hang upside down, and form a _____ around their body.
9. A caterpillar inside a chrysalis is said to be in the _____ stage.
10. Butterfly wings would be nearly transparent if they weren't covered in brightly colored, powdery _____.

pupal chitin Mexico lizards
Monarch egg caterpillar scales
species chrysalis patterns

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A Word Search Puzzle



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



MONARCH
BUTTERFLY
MEXICO
JOURNEY
EGG
CATERPILLAR
ADULT
SPECIES
PATTERNS
CHITIN

TRANSPARENT
SCALES
LIZARDS
HUNGRY
PLANTS
CHRYSLIS
PUPAL STAGE
ESCAPE
CHANGE

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Creative Writing Prompts

- 1. Imagine that you are sitting in a garden and a butterfly says hello to you. Would you talk with it? Write about your conversation.**
- 2. Have you ever seen migrating Monarch butterflies? If so, share your experience. If not, use your imagination and share what you think it would be like to see them. Write about it as a story, a poem, or even a song you can sing!**
- 3. What is the prettiest butterfly you can imagine? What would it look like and how would it act? Write about it and draw a picture to go along with your story.**
- 4. Imagine that you get to be a butterfly for one day. What do your wings look like? Where would you fly?**
- 5. Research and write about the prettiest species of butterfly you've ever seen.**

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Supplimental Study Materials

Websites

Beautiful Watercolor and Black Glue Butterfly Craft

<https://iheartcraftythings.com/watercolor-black-glue-butterfly-craft.html>

How to Make a Butterfly Garden

<https://thehappyhousewife.com/homeschool/how-to-make-a-butterfly-garden/>

Tomato Cage Caterpillar House

<https://chickenscratchny.com/2014/07/tomato-cage-caterpillar-house.html>

Books

Kaufman Field Guide to Butterflies of North America (Kaufman Field Guides)

by Jim P. Brock

Explore My World Butterflies

by Marfe Ferguson Delano

National Geographic Readers: Great Migrations Butterflies

by Laura Marsh

The Girl Who Drew Butterflies: How Maria Merian's Art Changed Science

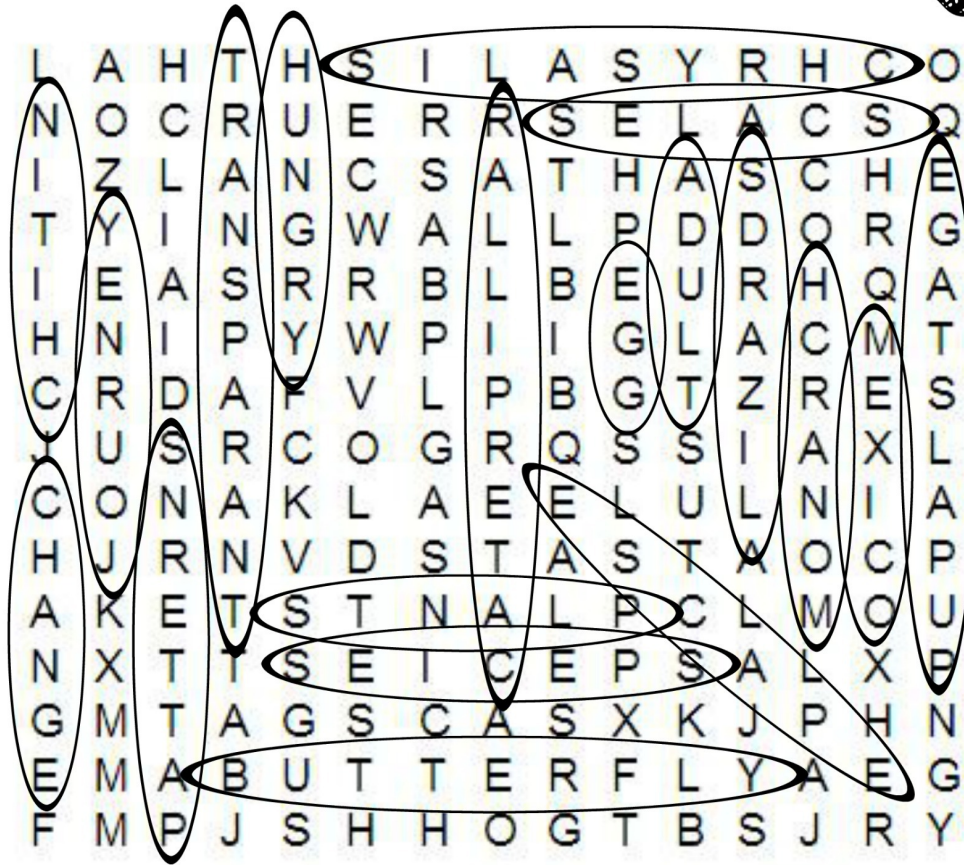
by Joyce Sidman

Butterflies: The Strange and Real Story of How a Caterpillar Turns Into a Butterfly

by Tabitha Dell'Angelo and Samantha Pincus

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