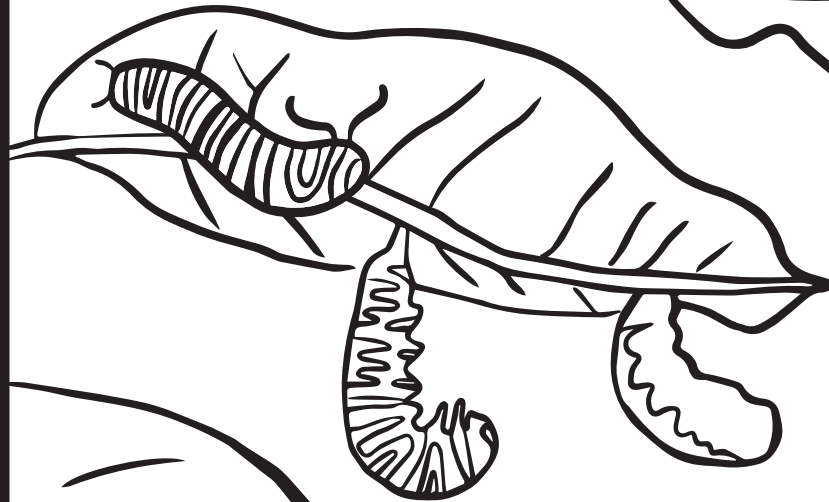
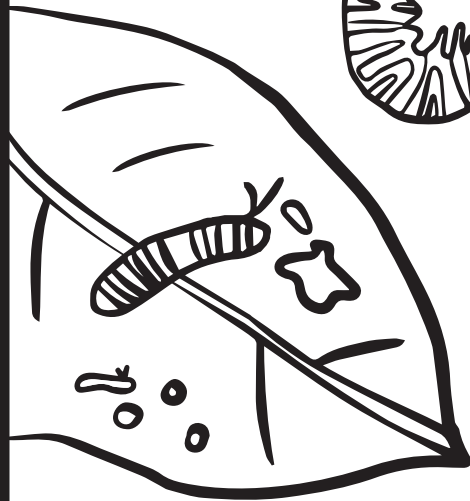


# A Monarch Butterfly's Life Cycle



## 2. Caterpillar

• Once the caterpillar is big enough it attaches its rear end to a leaf or stick and hangs upside down in a “J” shape. Then it sheds its skin one last time.



## 1. Egg

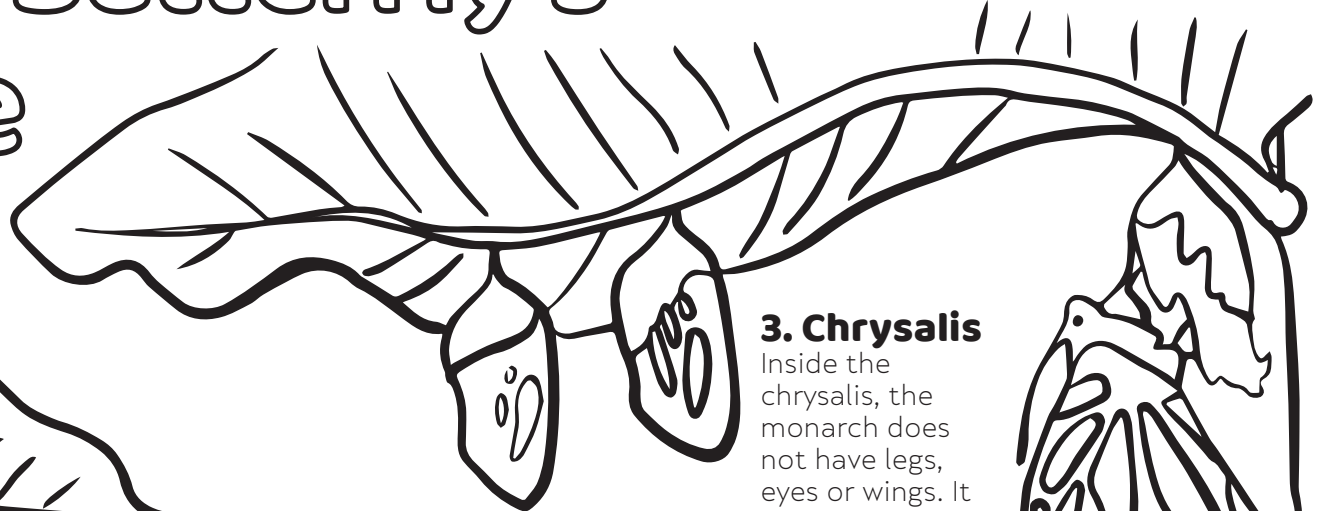
The female (or mother) monarch lays many tiny eggs on the underside of milkweed leaves.

## 2. Caterpillar

• When it is ready, the tiny caterpillar chews a hole in its shell and climbs out. Then it eats the shell.

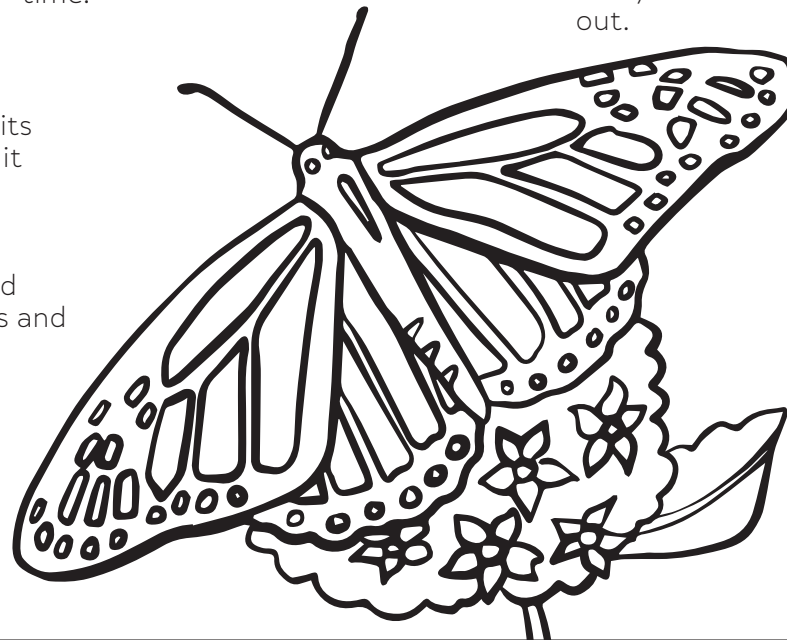
• The caterpillar only eats milkweed leaves. It eats and grows, eats and grows, eats and grows!

• As it gets bigger it outgrows its skin. It has to shed old skin and grow new skin a few times. It keeps eating and growing.



## 3. Chrysalis

Inside the chrysalis, the monarch does not have legs, eyes or wings. It hangs very still and over time the butterfly forms. After about 2 weeks, the butterfly is ready to come out.



## 4. Butterfly

When the butterfly breaks out of its chrysalis, the wings are wet and crumpled up and it can't fly. After a few hours the butterfly flies to flowers and drinks nectar. If it is a female, she will soon lay more eggs and the monarch life cycle begins again!