

BUTTERFLIES

One of nature's most majestic and breath taking insects would have to be the butterfly.

THE ANATOMY OF A BUTTERFLY

Like all insects, butterflies have six jointed legs, 3 body parts, a pair of antennae, compound eyes, and an exoskeleton. The butterfly's body is covered in tiny sensory hairs. The three body parts are the head, thorax (the chest), and the abdomen (the tail end).



LIFE-CYCLE OF A BUTTERFLY

Both butterflies and moths undergo a complete metamorphosis, going through four different life stages.

Egg: A butterfly starts its life off as an egg, which is often laid onto a leaf.

Larva: The larva which is also known as a caterpillar, hatches from an egg and eats leaves and flowers almost constantly. As the caterpillar grows, it loses its old skin many times before pupating.

Pupa: The caterpillar then turns into pupa, where it creates a cocoon.

Adult: A beautiful flying adult will emerge and continue the cycle.

Butterflies can't hear, but they can feel vibrations.



TAKING FLIGHT

Butterflies are very good fliers. They are the proud owners of two pairs of large wings that are attached to the butterfly's thorax. The wings are covered with colourful, iridescent scales in overlapping rows.

Butterflies can only fly if their body temperature is above 30°C.

Butterflies sun themselves to warm their body up in cooler weather.



THE HUNGRY CATERPILLAR

Caterpillars spend most of their time eating leaves using their strong jaws.

Butterflies and moths can only sip liquid food. They do this by using a tube-like proboscis, which also means a long flexible tongue. Nectar from flowers and the juices from rotting fruits find themselves on the butterflies menu.

HOME SWEET HOME

Butterflies can be found anywhere and everywhere! Hot or cold, dry and moist, you can find a butterfly if you look hard enough. But the preferred habitat for a butterfly would have to be lush rainforests in tropical areas.



Butterflies taste with their feet and smell with their antennae.

Monarch Butterflies can migrate thousands of kilometres.