



Enhancing Habitat

A butterfly garden supplies food for all stages of a butterfly's life. Caterpillars, which become butterflies, need leaves from host plants to fuel growth. Butterflies need nectar from flowers for sugar's high energy and nutrients.

Eggs are laid in safe places, on or near the caterpillar's host plant so food is available upon hatching.

Caterpillars eat host plants until they have completed their growth.

The caterpillar will transform into a butterfly inside a protective covering, called a chrysalis. It is inside the chrysalis that a transitional form called a pupae breaks down the caterpillar and transforms it into the adult stage. The chrysalis will keep the pupae safe for two weeks to one year (depending on the species).

Butterflies live to reproduce. They do not eat like caterpillars, but instead sip nectar from flowers through a straw-like proboscis.

Providing a variety of caterpillar host and butterfly nectar plants is a great way to enhance your own backyard and supply habitat for all stages of a butterfly's life.

Meadow photo: Nick Cavagnaro
Illustrations: Doyle Wegner