



MANZI's NEWS



A Newsletter for Manzi's Water Wise Club Members

April 2016

Insects and Life Cycles

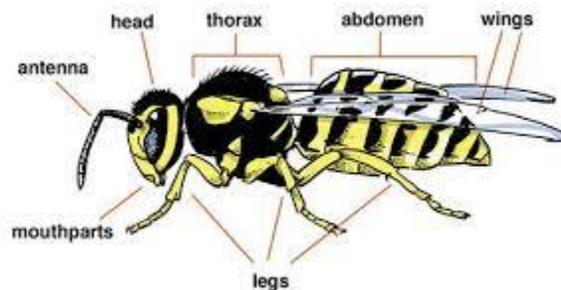
Hi Friends

Manzi is my name and "edutainment" is my game.

April is the fourth month on our 2016 calendar. Up to now it has been a wonderful year for me! How is it treating you my dear friends? I am so happy because I have learnt about insects and their life cycles already during the first few months of this year. I have learnt so much about these amazing and sometimes unappreciated animals, that I would love to share with you what I have learnt.

Insects live everywhere! In your house, garden and in the veld too. There are millions of types of insects on Earth.

Did you know that an insect is a small animal having 3 pairs of legs? They also have 1 pair of antennae. Some have no wings, whilst others have 1 or 2 pairs of wings. Insects have a segmented body divided into 3 regions namely the head, thorax and abdomen.



Credit: <https://www.google.co.za/search?q=cross+section+of+insects&biw>

The life of most insects starts with an egg, meaning that the female insects lay eggs that will hatch into young ones.

We are going to learn about 2 insects, the butterfly and the ant, as these can be found in many places around the world.

Life Cycle of a Butterfly

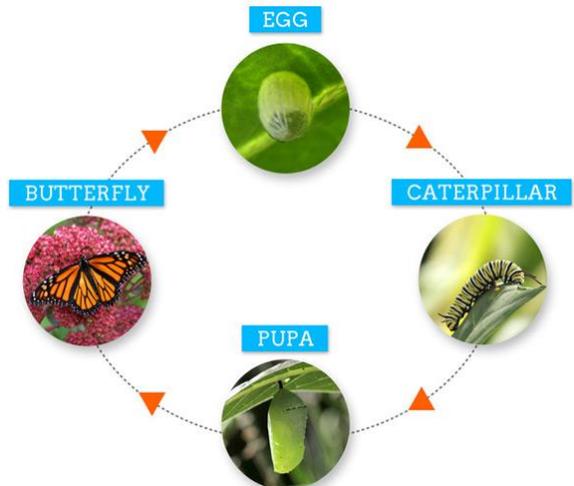
There are four stages in a butterfly's life cycle.

Stage 1: The laying of eggs by the female butterfly, most commonly on a leaf.

Stage 2: The eggs hatch into a larva (known as a caterpillar). It takes about five days for the eggs to hatch.

Stage 3: The larva (caterpillar) grows really fast because it eats all the time. Once the caterpillar has grown it makes a cocoon (pupa) around itself. The caterpillar who is then inside the cocoon starts to change into a butterfly.

Stage 4: The butterfly comes out and it learns to fly. It will eventually find a mate, eggs will be laid and the life cycle process will start all over again.



Credit: www.flightofthebutterflies.com

Life Cycle of an Ant

Ants live together, and we refer to them as a colony of ants. Their life is of a social nature and members of the colony are divided into different groups, with each group having a specific job. There are soldiers (who protect the family), workers (who supply the food and maintain the "home"), whilst the queen breeds. Fertilized eggs produce female ants (queens, workers, or soldiers); unfertilized eggs produce male ants.

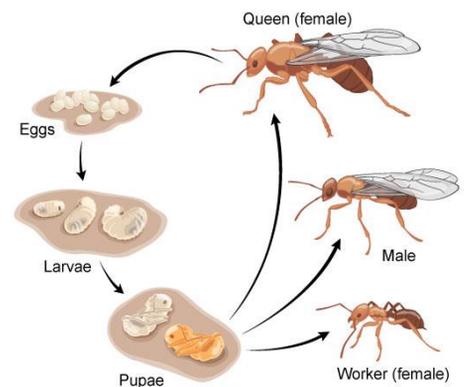
Stage 1: The queen lays eggs in an ant mound underground.

Stage 2: The eggs hatch into a larva. It takes about 8-10 days for the eggs to hatch. Environmental factors, such as the weather, also determines the time the eggs will hatch.

Stage 3: The larva grows really fast because it eats all the time. They shed their skin many times as they grow. The larva then spins a cocoon around itself and pupates. The body inside the cocoon starts to change into an ant.

Stage 4: The pupa then comes out as an adult and lives in the colony.

The queen continues to lay eggs and the life cycle process starts all over again.



Credit: www.askabiologist.asu.edu

Insect Name Activity

Complete the names of insects starting with the letters provided below:

A _____ B _____ C _____

D _____ E _____ F _____

T _____ M _____ L _____

Insects play a very important role in the environment. The roles that they play are for our benefit.

Insects pollinate flowers and this ensures that agricultural crops such as maize and fruits can grow. So that means they are helping to make sure that we get food!

Insects are food to other animals and they also help in the breaking down (decay) of dead and rotting things. This means that they are a very important part of the food pyramid and they help to keep our environment clean and can stop the spread of disease.

Insects are important in the manufacturing of medicines. Bees for instance produce a substance called histamine which is used in medicinal anti-histamines.

There are so many more things that insects do for us and our environment. I challenge you to go and learn more about why they are so important.

We really need to respect water and respect life. If we don't respect water, many insects will die from pollution and water wastage. All life on Earth needs water to survive...including our six-legged little friends, insects.

FRIENDS REMEMBER TO BE WATER WISE!

Till next time.

Your friend,
MANZI