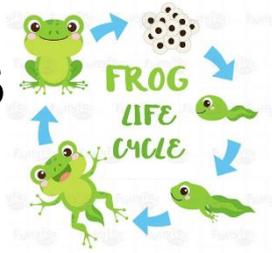


Life Cycles of Animals



You have already looked at the life cycles of plants. Animals too have a life cycle, but there are some differences between them. You are going to be looking at the similarities and differences between the life cycles of amphibians, birds, insects and mammals.

These BBC videos talk through the life cycles of different animals (and plants) – watch them first and complete the quiz at the bottom of the page (1st link). Once you have done this, read through the information throughout the rest of this guide.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zgssgk7/articles/zwn6mnb> & <https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/science-ks2--ks3-the-life-cycles-of-different-organisms/zvh8ap3>.

Other examples of flowering plants:



Plant Life Cycle

Below shows a reminder of the different stages flowering plants go through.

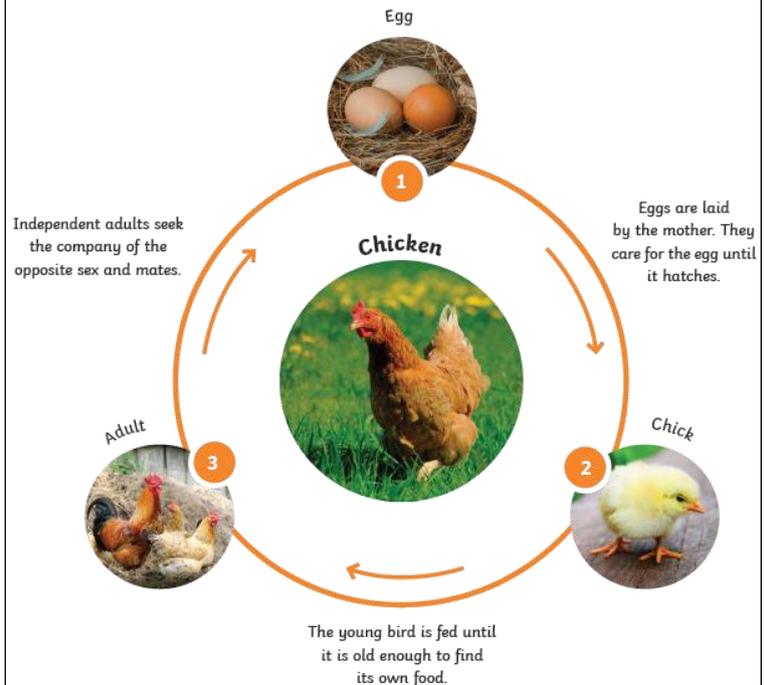


Other examples of birds:



Bird Life Cycle

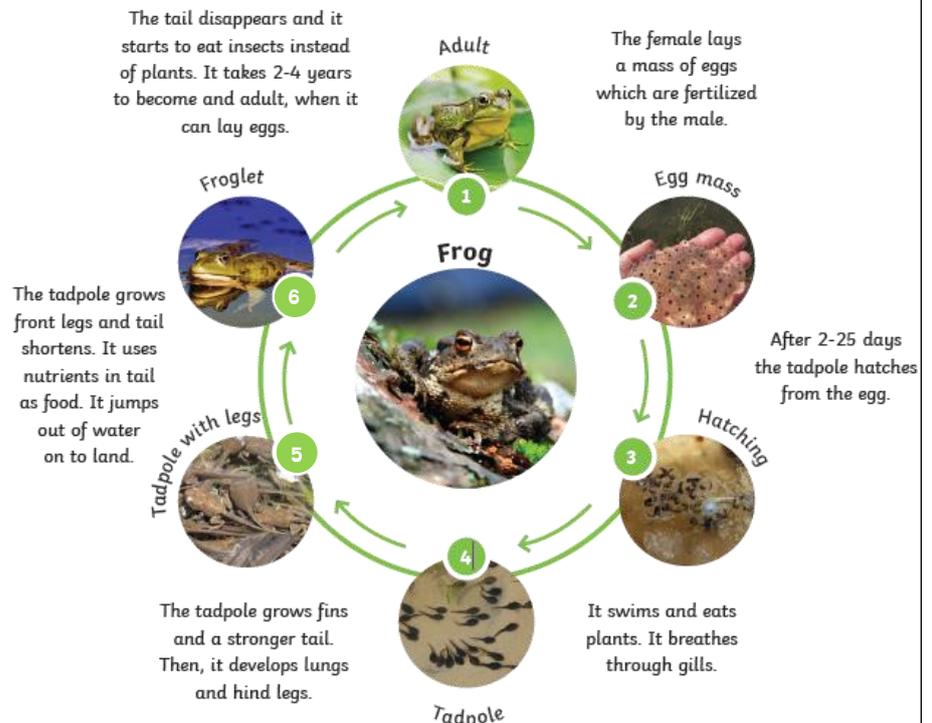
A bird is a **vertebrate** (has a backbone / spinal column). It has a beak, feathers and wings but not all birds can fly. They are **warm-blooded** (aka **endothermic** – they can maintain their body temperature).



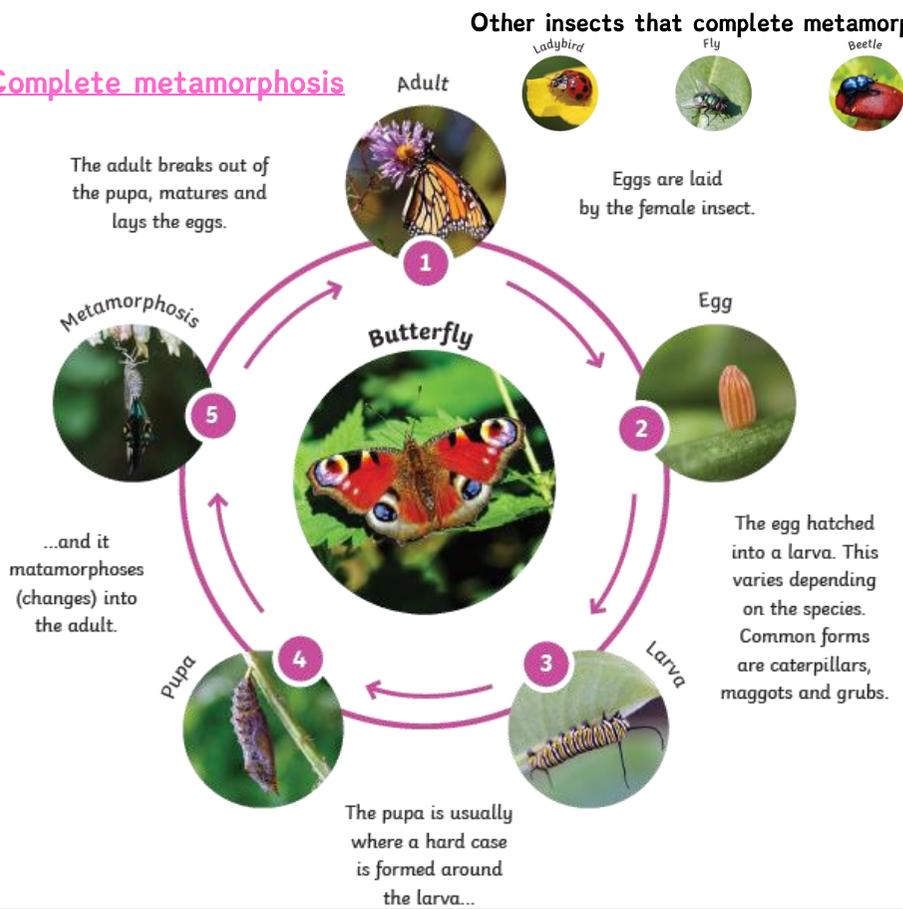
Amphibian Life Cycle

An amphibian is a **cold-blooded** or **ectothermic** organism – this means they cannot maintain their own temperature and rely on their environment to do so. They can breathe in and out of water. Amphibians often have moist, slimy skin.

Other examples of amphibians:



Complete metamorphosis

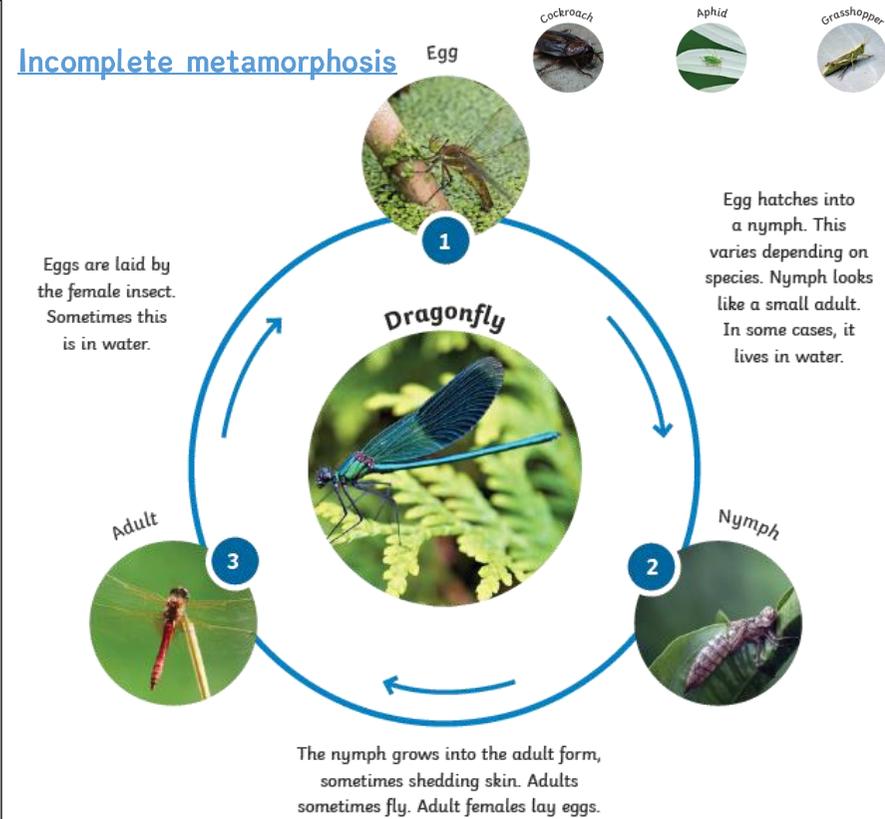


Insect Life Cycle

An insect is an organism whose body is split into three sections called the **head, thorax** and the **abdomen**. Insects have an **exoskeleton** – meaning their structural support is outside of the body. Insects undergo **metamorphosis** – a change in the organism's structure of their body and their behaviour.

Some insects undergo **complete metamorphosis** (4 stages: egg, larva, pupa and adult) and some go through **incomplete metamorphosis** (3 stages: egg, nymph, adult).

Other insects that undergo incomplete metamorphosis:



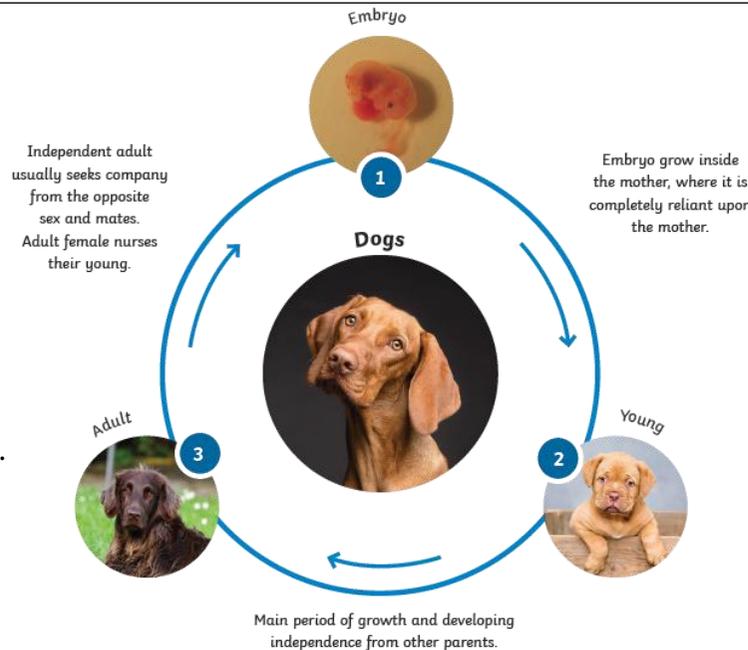
Mammal Life Cycle

A mammal is a particular type of animal. Like birds, they are also **endothermic / warm-blooded**. One thing that makes mammals different to the other types of animals in this guide is that mammals make milk to feed their babies.

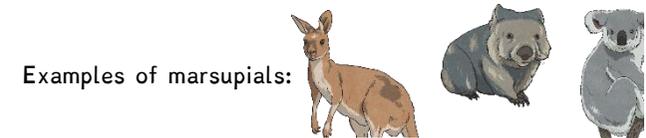
Most mammals are **placentals**: their young grow inside the female's body and are born when they are fully developed.

Some are **monotremes**: their young hatch from eggs.

Some are **marsupials**: their young are born not fully developed. They are carried and fed in a pouch on the female's stomach until they are fully developed.



The mammal life cycle we have included shows that of placental mammals – the most prominent type of mammal.



YOUR TASK

Now you have read about the different life cycles of **plants, mammals, birds, amphibians** and **insects** and watched the BBC videos, you should be able to see that, although some are very different from each other, they do all share similarities between them.

Your task is to show the similarities and differences between the different life cycles of each of these organisms. You may choose how to do this from the following:

- Complete the table below (you could print it out or draw a version of it in your books). Use the two empty rows to come up with your own differences or similarities (you may find more). Using the table, write a paragraph in your books to describe the differences and similarities.
- Create a double bubble map or Venn diagram showing the similarities or differences – not a double bubble or Venn diagram that we would usually use as you will need to have five different circles around the outside with similarities in the middle.
- You have been asked to narrate a wildlife documentary called ‘Life’ all about the life cycles of plants and animals. You need to write the script which includes the similarities and differences between their life cycles. We have provided ideas for what to include below.

	Mammal	Amphibian	Insect	Bird	Flowering plant
Starts as an egg			✓		
Number of stages in the life cycle	3				
Does the young look like the adult?				Yes	

‘Life’ documentary ideas:

- Introduce the programme and explain which plants and animals you will be talking about
 - E.g. *Welcome to ‘Life’. Today you will find out about the similarities and differences between the life cycles of plants and animals...*
- Describe the similarities between the life cycles of plants, mammals, birds, amphibians and insects.
 - E.g. *All types of plants and animals reproduce to create their offspring. Some have more in common than others, for example...*
- Describe the differences between the life cycles of plants, mammals, birds, amphibians and insects.
 - E.g. *There are several differences between the life cycles of plants and animals. For example, amphibians, birds and insects lay eggs, but plants and most mammals do not...*
- Give your audience any extra information you think they need and thank them for listening.
 - E.g. *Thank you for listening today. We hope you have learnt a lot about different life cycles.*