



2-1-2015

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Joshua Feingold
Nova Southeastern University, joshua@nova.edu

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Recommended Citation

Feingold, Joshua (2015) "Butterfly Biology," *Quadrivium: A Journal of Multidisciplinary Scholarship*: Vol. 6 : Iss. 1 , Article 4.

Available at: <https://nsuworks.nova.edu/quadrivium/vol6/iss1/4>

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Butterfly Biology

By Joshua Feingold

Butterflies are iconic images of delicate beauty. They are models of change, having metamorphosed from grub-like caterpillars to winged, fairy-like creatures. During their life-history, host plants are consumed by the larvae (caterpillars), and are often then pollinated by the adults (butterflies) in a co-evolved relationship that ensures the survival of both plant and butterfly. Their seemingly quiescent pupal phase houses this profound physiological and morphological transition. The following images provide the stark, visual juxtapositions among these stages. All images were obtained in Davie, Florida.

Atala (Eumaeus atala)

In NSU's Mesozoic Garden



Figure 1a: Eggs and newly hatched caterpillars on cycad (*Zamia*)
Photo: Feingold personal collection



Figure 1b: Caterpillars on cycad (*Zamia*)
Photo: Feingold personal collection



Figure 1c: Caterpillar on horsetail (*Equisetum*)
Photo: Feingold personal collection



Figure 1d: Pupae on cycad (*Zamia*)
Photo: Feingold personal collection



Figure 1e: Adult on fern
Photo: Feingold personal collection

Giant Swallowtail (*Papilio cresphontes*)

On citrus tree



Figure 2a: Caterpillar
Photo: Feingold personal collection



Figure 2b: Pupa
Photo: Feingold personal collection



Figure 2c: Adult (side view)
Photo: Feingold personal collection



Figure 2d: Adult (front view)
Photo: Feingold personal collection

Zebra Longwing (*Heliconius charithonia*)



Figure 3a: Caterpillar
Photo: Feingold personal collection



Figure 3b: Adult
Photo: Feingold personal collection

Gulf Fritillary (*Agraulis vanillae*)



Figure 4a: Caterpillar on passion flower (*Passiflora*)
Photo: Feingold personal collection



Figure 4b: Adult on manure
Photo: Feingold personal collection

Io Moth (*Automeris io*)

On oak



Figure 5: Caterpillar
Photo: Feingold personal collection