

Name _____



The Amazing Life Cycle of a Mosquito

Mosquitoes may be small, but their life cycle is an incredible process. These insects go through four main stages in their lives: egg, larva, pupa, and adult. This journey from birth to adulthood is called complete metamorphosis.

The life of a mosquito begins in water. Female mosquitoes lay their eggs on the surface of standing water, such as ponds, puddles, or even water-filled containers. Some mosquitoes lay their eggs in groups, forming a raft of up to 300 eggs! Depending on the temperature, the eggs hatch into larvae within 1-3 days.

Mosquito larvae, also called "wrigglers," live in water and feed on tiny organisms like algae. They breathe through small tubes at the surface of the water. The larva stage lasts about 4-10 days, during which they grow quickly and molt several times to shed their old skin.

Next comes the pupa stage, often called the "tumbler" stage. Pupae do not eat but are very active, tumbling and moving in the water when disturbed. Inside the pupa, the mosquito is transforming into an adult. This stage usually lasts about 2-3 days.

When the transformation is complete, the adult mosquito emerges from the water. At first, the adult rests on the surface to dry its wings and harden its body. Once ready, it begins its life on land. Adult mosquitoes live for about 1-2 weeks, but during that time, they can lay hundreds of eggs and continue the cycle.

Mosquitoes thrive because of their ability to reproduce quickly and adapt to different environments. Although their lives are short, they play an important role in ecosystems by providing food for birds, bats, and other animals.