

The butterfly eggs that you will receive will be those of the **Orchard Butterfly** (*Papilio aegeus*). You should still read the information booklet carefully for general life history and information, but note the different food requirements of these caterpillars.

Orchard Butterfly caterpillars feed on the leaves of citrus trees (lemon, orange, mandarin etc.). Many people grow citrus in their gardens from which leaves can be gathered to feed your caterpillars, or a potted plant can be used. Make sure that the leaves you use have not been sprayed with insecticide. If you are not sure if they have been sprayed, it is best to rinse leaves thoroughly before feeding them to your caterpillars.

When your eggs start to hatch place a soft citrus leaf in with them so they can crawl onto the leaf. New growth leaves are best for small caterpillars. Fresh leaves should be given every 2 days, sooner if they have all been eaten or if the leaves have started to dry out. Alternatively you could put a twig of citrus in a bottle of water which will last for several days. Be sure to wrap material or tissue around the stem so it fits tightly into the bottle. This will prevent the caterpillars from climbing down into the water and drowning. Allow the caterpillars to crawl onto new leaves rather than trying to transfer them. It is easiest to put the portion of old leaf they are on onto the new leaf. This will help ensure you don't disturb them when they are moulting, as the caterpillars are easily injured when they are going through this stage. Frass should be removed every day to help keep the caterpillars healthy.

In their final instar these caterpillars change to a different pattern and colour, becoming green within a day of their final moult. At the end of this instar they release excess body fluids and then crawl around looking for a suitable place to pupate and become a chrysalis (or pupa). When a suitable site is found, usually on a branch if available, they spin a silk pad which the end of the chrysalis hooks into to secure it during metamorphosis. Orchard Butterflies also spin a fine silk girdle for extra support for the chrysalis. The butterfly will emerge after approximately 2 weeks.

ORCHARD BUTTERFLY CHRYSALIS

