

COLIN THE CADDISFLY LIFE CYCLE

On the edge of a small pond, in the British countryside, there was a marsh marigold. On the leaves of the marsh marigold was a small lump of jelly. Inside this jelly there were lots of tiny eggs and they were just starting to hatch! Colin the caddisfly larva wiggled and squiggled his way out of his egg and through the protective jelly. He fell with a plop into the pond! As Colin fell through the water, he saw lots of fish with their huge jaws open wide ready to swallow up small invertebrates like him.

"I need to find somewhere to hide," thought Colin as he fell.

When he finally reached the bottom of the pond he began to work. Colin spun silky thread and gathered up small sticks and bits of sand from nearby. He worked and he worked, engineering a perfect suit of armour to protect him from the big scary fish.

"Wow! This is hungry work!" reflected Colin.

In his new outfit Colin went off in search of some food. A caddisfly larva's favourite food is water mint, and luckily for Colin, there was lots in his pond! Colin feasted for months! He met new friends, like Sandra the snail and Wilbur Biggins the water boatman. Colin also spent a lot of time dodging away from predators and repairing his suit of armour when it got damaged. He did a lot of growing too and had to add to his outfit as he grew.

One day, when Colin was so large he was struggling to move around he slowly climbed up the plant he was on. He climbed as close to the surface of the water as he could go. There he used his silk to tie himself to a leaf. Next, Colin cut some bits of leaf off and used them to close his suit of armour. Hidden safely inside he went through metamorphosis. He changed from a squishy larva into an adult caddisfly.

When the transformation was complete Colin broke out of his armour. He climbed up the leaf, out of the water and into the beautiful bright sunshine. He sat for a moment and let the warmth of the sun dry off his wings, listening to the birds chirping around him.

He took off. Whizzing through the air, up to the sky above! Colin passed his distant cousin Bernard the butterfly, before a speedy swallow swooped towards him. Colin dodged out of the way in the nick of time!

"I don't have a suit of armour now I am out of the water! And that swallow was almost as big as the fish that used to try to eat me! I better find a place to hide" thought Colin.

Colin found a perfect hiding spot in the bark of a tree and slept until the sun had set and the moon was shining high in the sky.

Now he was an adult caddisfly Colin only wanted one thing; another caddisfly to spend the rest of his life with. He took off and flew towards the light of the moon. Soon he found a party! There were hundreds of caddisflies dancing in the sky, swooping up and falling back down! It was at this party that Colin met Cally, it was love at first sight. Cally, it turns out had lived in the same pond as Colin when she was a larva, and they both knew Wilbur Biggins the water boatman!

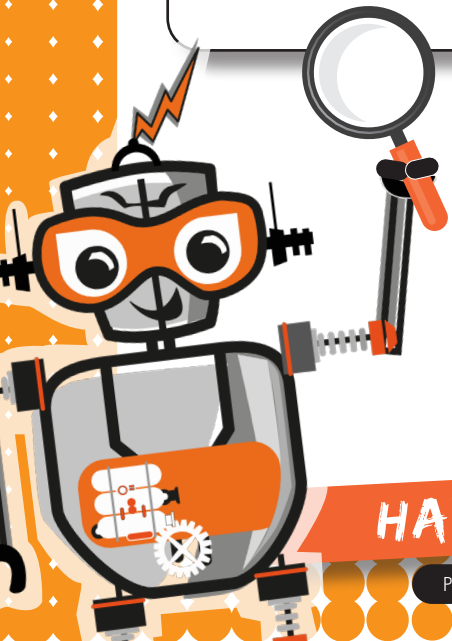
Colin and Cally spent the rest of their days together. In between dancing and hiding from birds, Cally laid hundreds of eggs on the plants around the pond where they both grew up. And so, even though Colin's life came to an end (an adult caddisfly only lives for 2 weeks), the cycle of life will continue, and the pond will always be home to caddisflies.

DRAW A FOOD CHAIN WITH A CADDISFLY

DRAW THE LIFECYCLE OF A CADDISFLY

See the next page to answer some questions, as well as develop your own research project.

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What did Colin make his suit of armour from?

What are the names of Colin's friends?

What was Colin's favourite food?

What animals in the story are predators?

Where did Colin live when he was a larva?

What animal is a distant cousin of the caddisfly?

RESEARCH THE LIFECYCLE OF A BUTTERFLY AND WRITE YOUR OWN STORY!

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