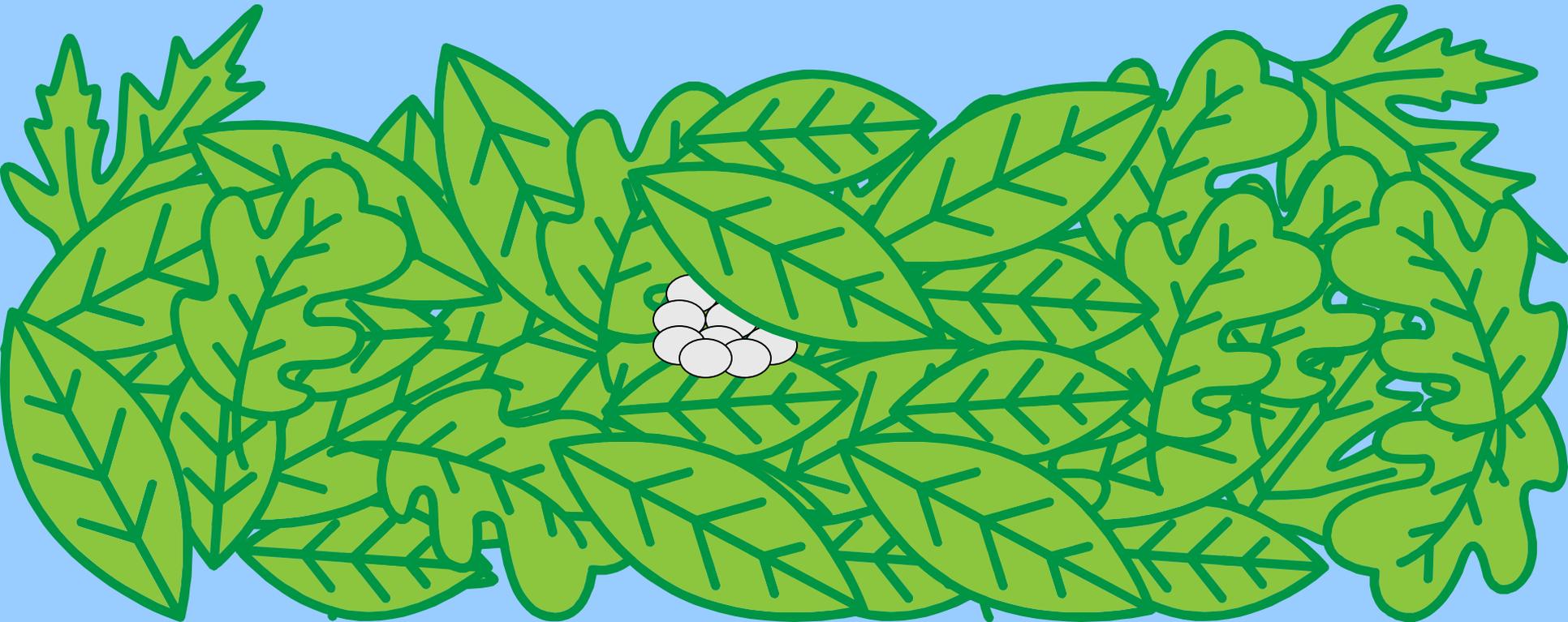


The Case of the Missing Caterpillar

A look at the life cycle of the caterpillar

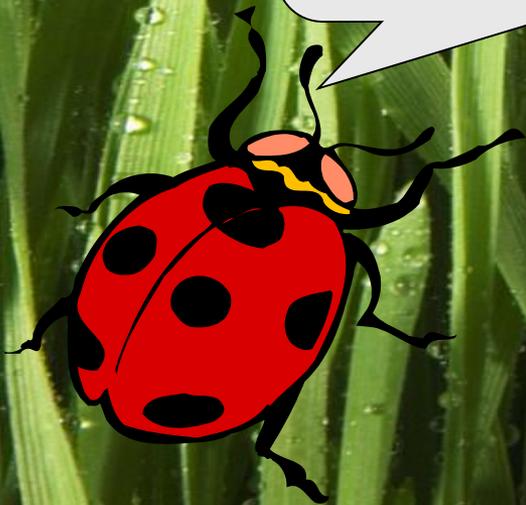


It is springtime. There is a cluster of eggs hidden under a leaf





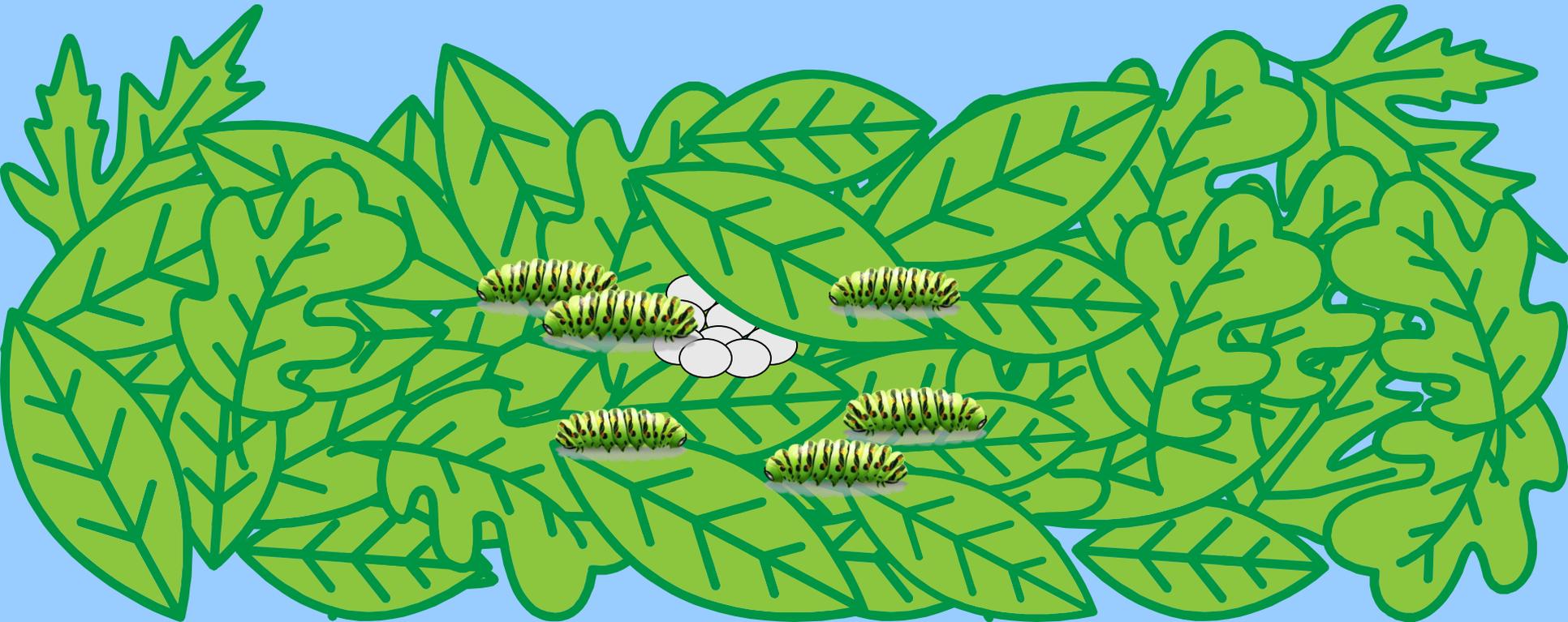
What kind of eggs
are they?



I don't know, but
they've been
there for about
ten days.



The eggs hatch and lots of baby caterpillars wriggle out.



The caterpillars follow each other to the top of a plant. They all make a silk nest to hide in.



The nest will protect
the caterpillars
from bad weather
and hungry birds
like me!



The caterpillar is very hungry. It munches nettles and grows bigger and bigger...



... until one day it grows too big for it's skin!





It's skin is peeling off! There is another skin underneath.

That will keep happening you know. It changes it's skin three times.



Now all alone the grown-up caterpillar
curls up in a leaf.



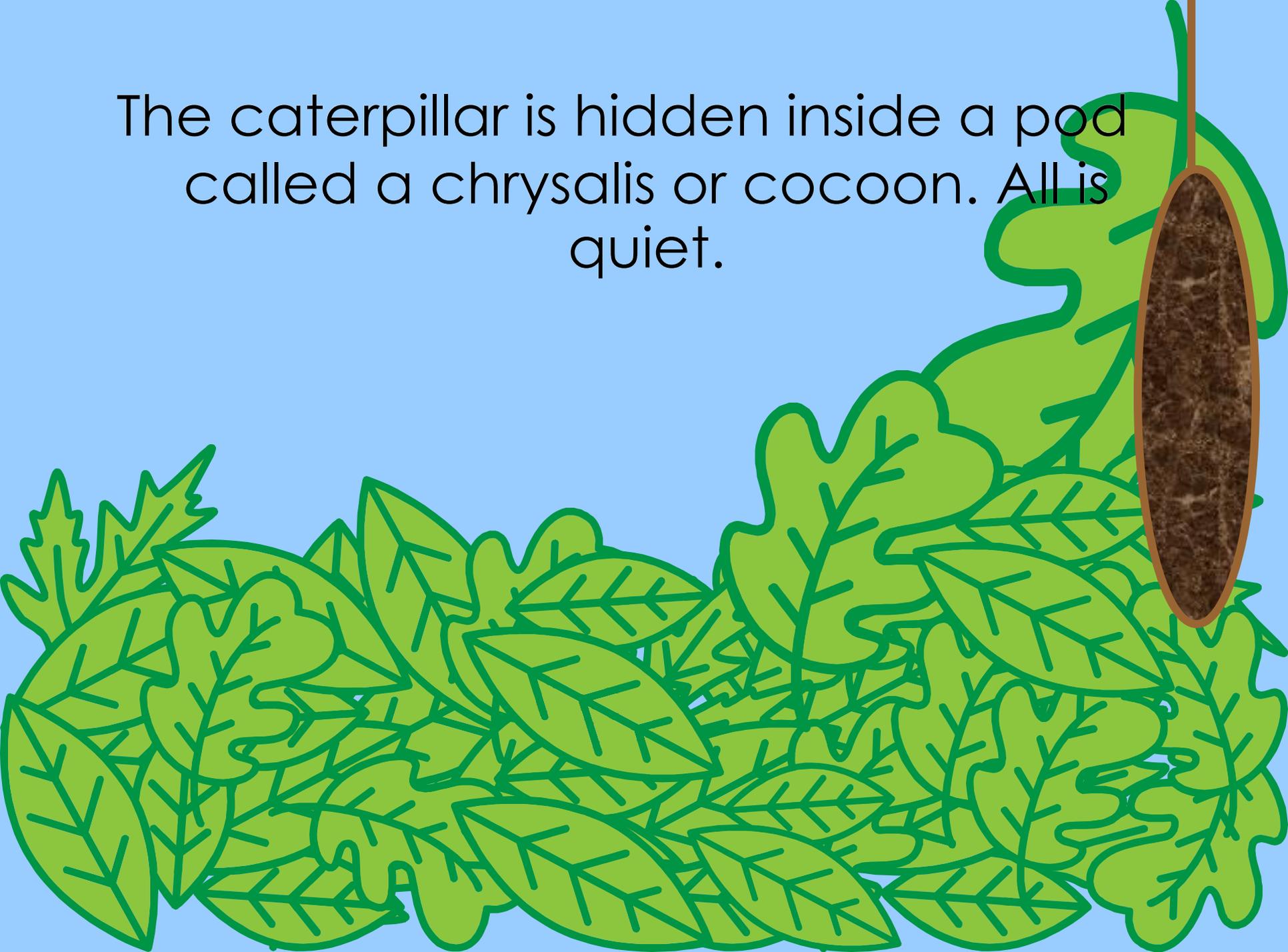
The caterpillar has disappeared!

This is the case of the missing caterpillar!

De de derrrr!!!!



The caterpillar is hidden inside a pod called a chrysalis or cocoon. All is quiet.



How long does it take for the chrysalis to open?



It depends on what kind of butterfly it is. Some open after two weeks, others can take up to two Years!

This one has taken fourteen days!



Then the chrysalis begins to split open
and...



**...out came a beautiful
butterfly!**



Four weeks later, the butterflies lay more eggs and the adventure begins all over again.





I can't wait for those eggs to hatch.



Me too! But this time we'll know where the missing caterpillar is!

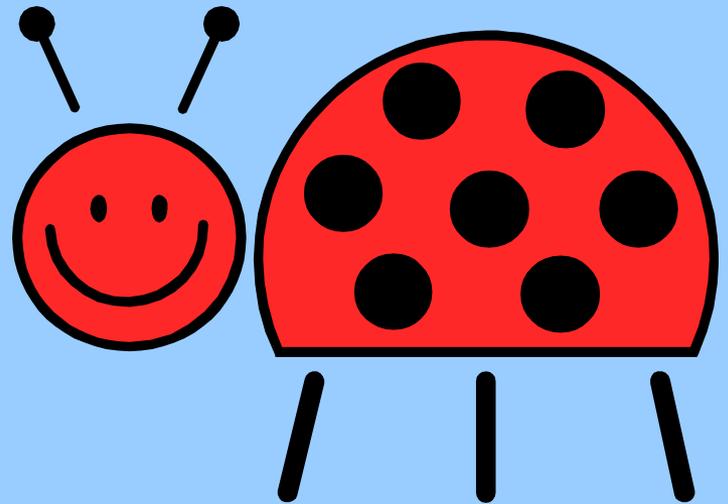


Can you answer this question?

1. How long do the eggs take to turn into caterpillars?

Answer

Ten days

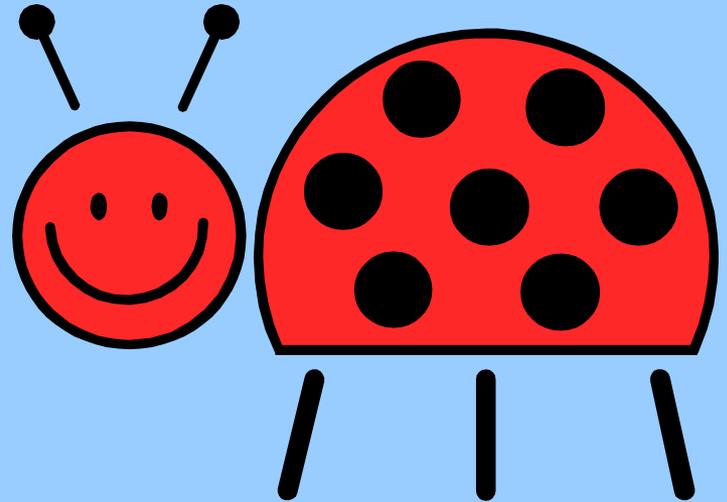


Can you answer this question?

2. Why do the caterpillars
make a silk nest?

Answer

To protect them from bad weather and birds.

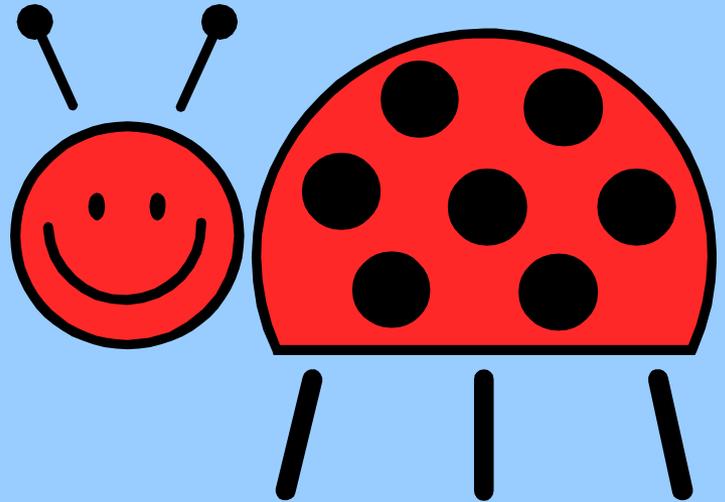


Can you answer this question?

3. How many times does a caterpillar change it's skin?

Answer

Three times

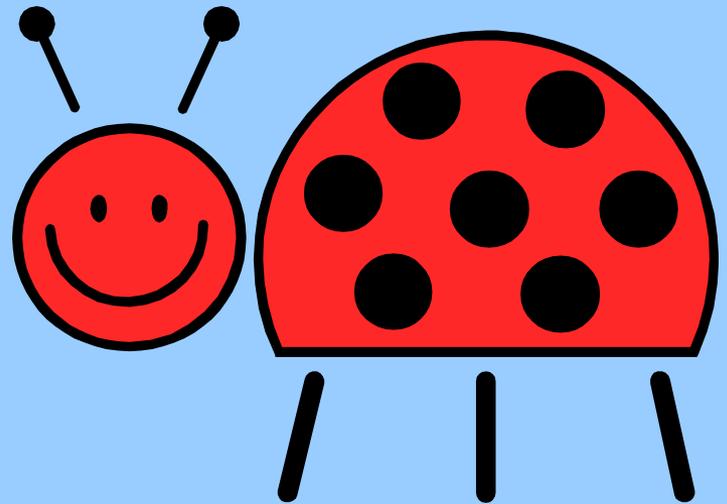


Can you answer this question?

4. What is the name of the pod that the caterpillar hides inside?

Answer

A chrysalis or cocoon

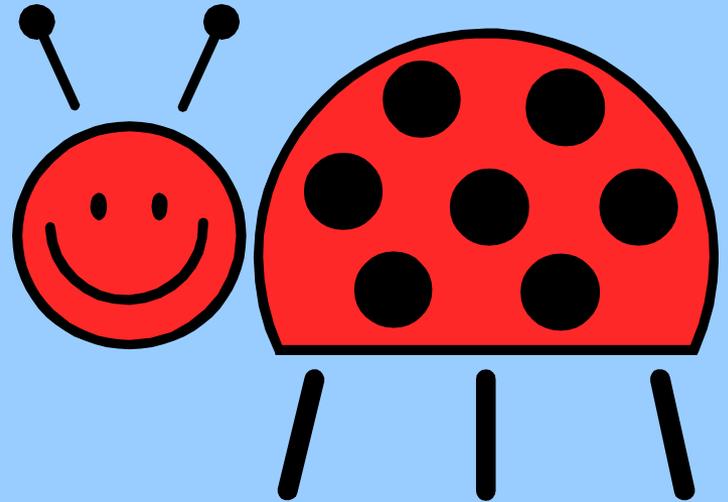


**Can you answer this
question?**

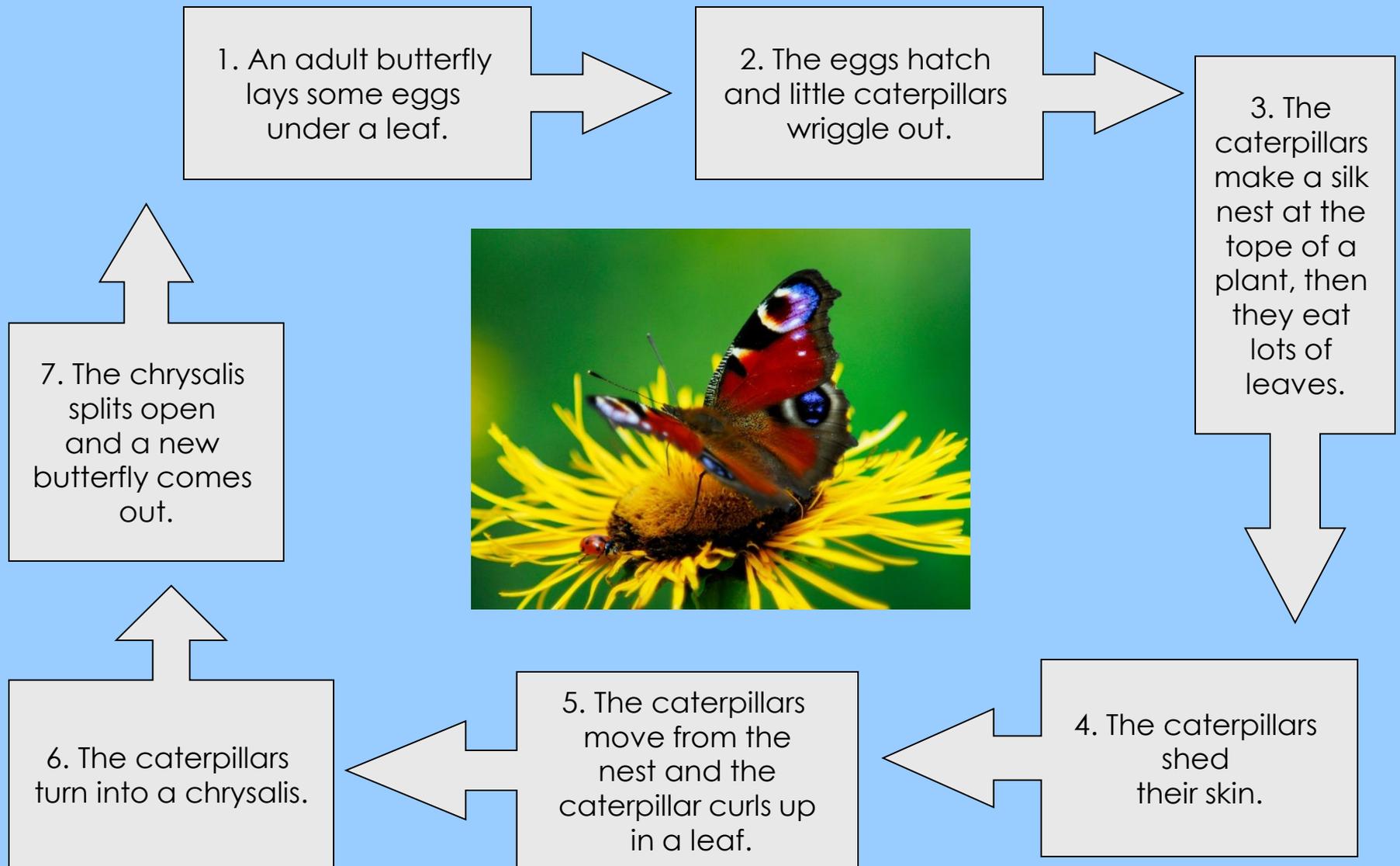
5. How long does the caterpillar stay inside the chrysalis?

Answer

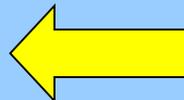
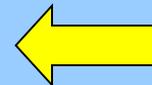
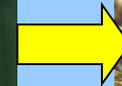
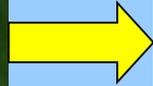
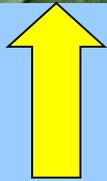
Usually about two weeks but sometimes up to two years.



Shall we look again at the life cycle of a butterfly?



Here's what we've got to do. Can we remember the life cycle of a Butterfly?



Useful Words

Hatch To come out of an egg.

Nest The home of insects, birds or animals. Some creatures are born in the nest.

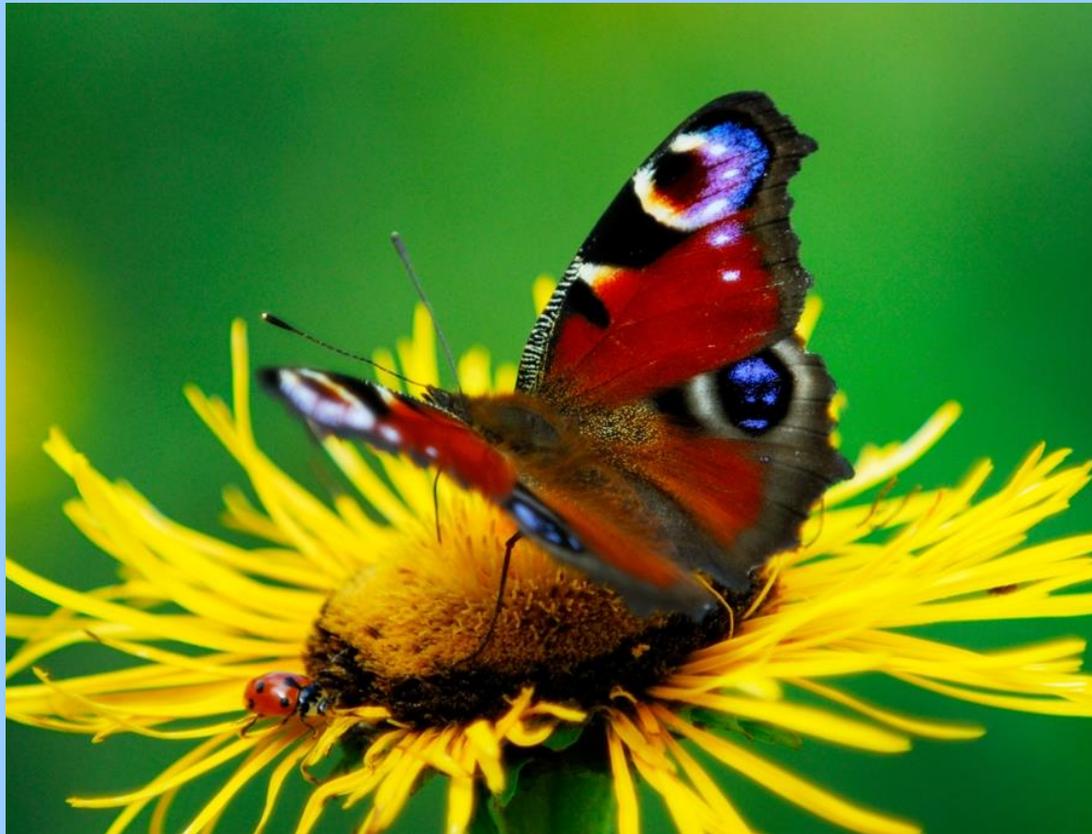
Nettle A big weed with prickly leaves.

Chrysalis The pod or case which a caterpillar changes into a butterfly.

Pod A kind of shell or case, like a chrysalis.

Did you know..?

There are lots of different types of butterflies.
You are very likely to see this one: **the peacock butterfly.**



The peacock butterfly **hibernates** in the cold winter months. It hangs upside down and does not eat, sleep or move for six months.

They awake from hibernation in the spring and when the sun comes out the butterflies are ready to mate.

The peacock butterfly lays her eggs on the underside of stinging nettle leaves. The female lays hundreds of eggs because some get eaten by other animals.

The peacock butterfly takes two weeks to hatch from it's chrysalis. The change that happens inside the chrysalis is called **metamorphosis**.

