

Life Cycle 2

Rhinoceros Beetle

A single female Rhinoceros beetle can lay up to 50 ova (eggs) in decomposing vegetation matter. Eggs are small and white and take around 3 – 4 weeks to hatch. From each egg a single larva (grub) will emerge. The translucent creamy – white grubs feed on the decomposing matter and can grow up to a length of 80 mm. To reach this enormous length, larvae will shed their exoskeletons three times. When the grubs are fully grown they search for a suitable site to change to a pupa.

At this stage each beetle larva makes a chamber underground where it can quietly turn into a pupa and finally emerge as an adult. These chambers are referred to as a pupal chamber or pupa cells. Each larva makes its' own pupa cell in the soil.

Inside the cell, the larva finally comes to rest. Here it moults its' skin for the last time. The skin splits down its body and the insect wriggles to work itself out of its' old skin. What was once a larva is now a pupa.

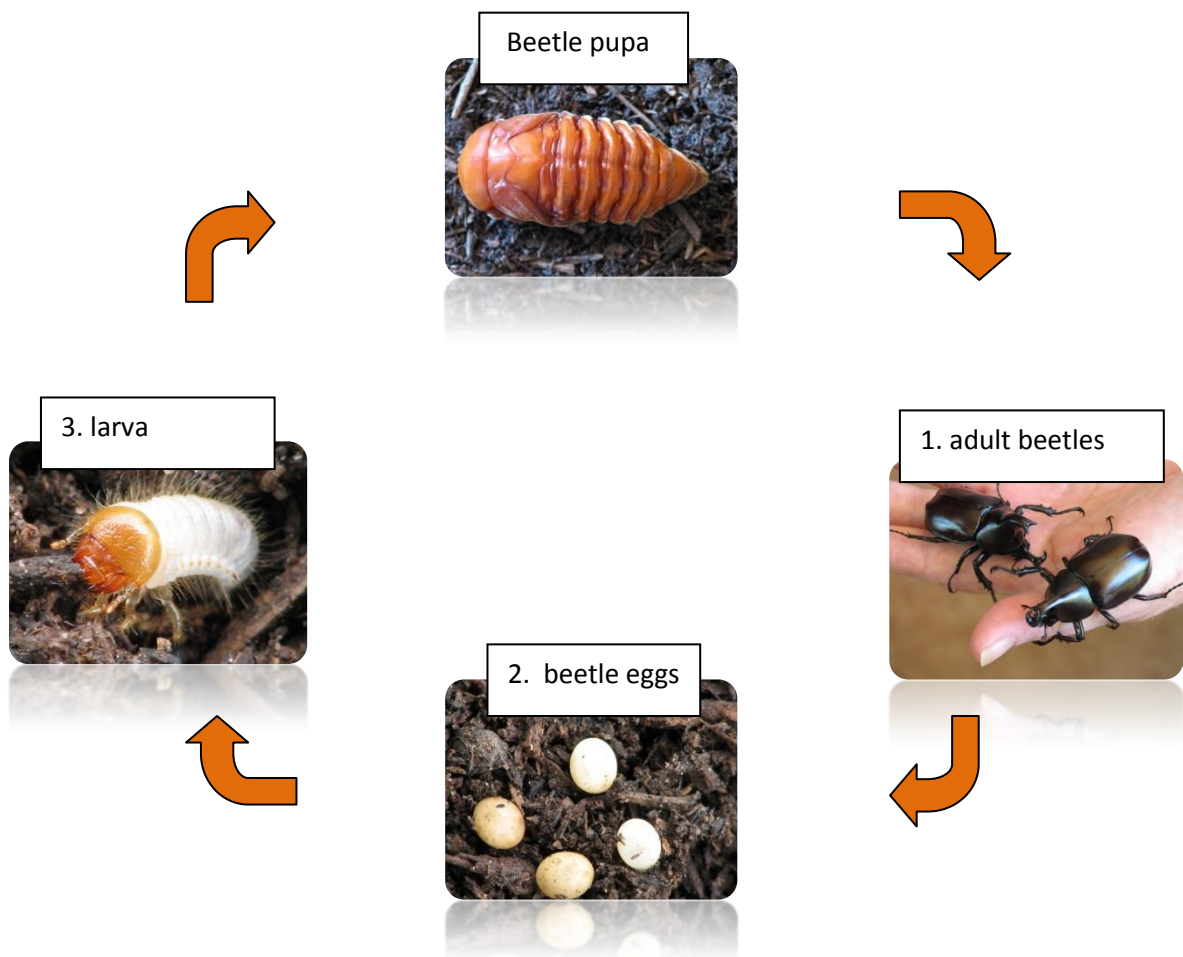
As a pupa it appears rather dormant, moving very little. The pupa breathes but it does not eat at all, yet it is going through another change. The shape of the adult insect is moulded inside the pupa skin. When fully developed an adult beetle will emerge, leaving behind the empty pupa skin.

At this stage the freshly changed beetle is soft. Over a period of a week or more, the beetle slowly hardens and develops all its correct adult colouration. After some weeks to months the beetle is ready to leave its' pupa cell and will dig its' way to the surface and take its' first flight; quite often after rain.

Once the adult beetles emerge, they will mate, females will lay eggs and the cycle starts once again.

Life Cycle of the RHINOCEROS BEETLE

Fill in the missing scientific names of the stages of the rhinoceros beetle life cycle.



Glossary: the scientific word for grub is larva; eggs are known as ova.