

## Learning About Life Cycles

What is a life cycle? A cycle is the steps something takes, so a life cycle is the steps something living takes, from when it is first formed until it dies. Everything that lives has a life cycle, but life cycles can look very different. Sometimes, an animal that is a baby looks an awful lot like what it will look like as an adult. It won't change much, just get a lot bigger. Even humans are like this. After it starts to grow in its mother, a baby person has a body just like an adult, only much smaller. It has eyes, ears, a nose, a mouth, arms and legs, fingers and toes. It looks like a person, just a tiny person, even before it's born. But some animals, like a butterfly, don't start out looking anything like they will when they are older. A butterfly changes a lot as it goes through its life cycle. Let's take a look at the life cycles of some animals and see what happens to them.



**Arctic foxes** live near the Arctic Ocean. When they are born, they are called cubs or **pups**. Pups stay with their mother in their den for the first three weeks, and both the mother and father bring the pups food. After they are about eight to ten weeks old, they can leave the den and hunt for food with their parents.

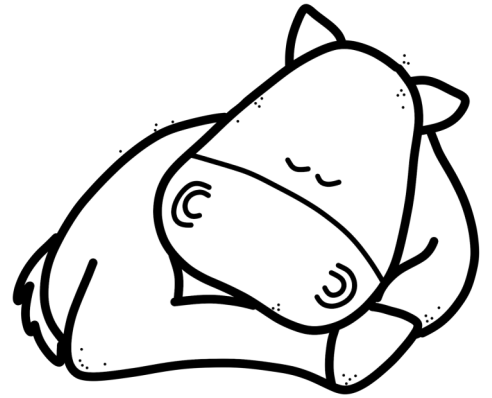


Pup

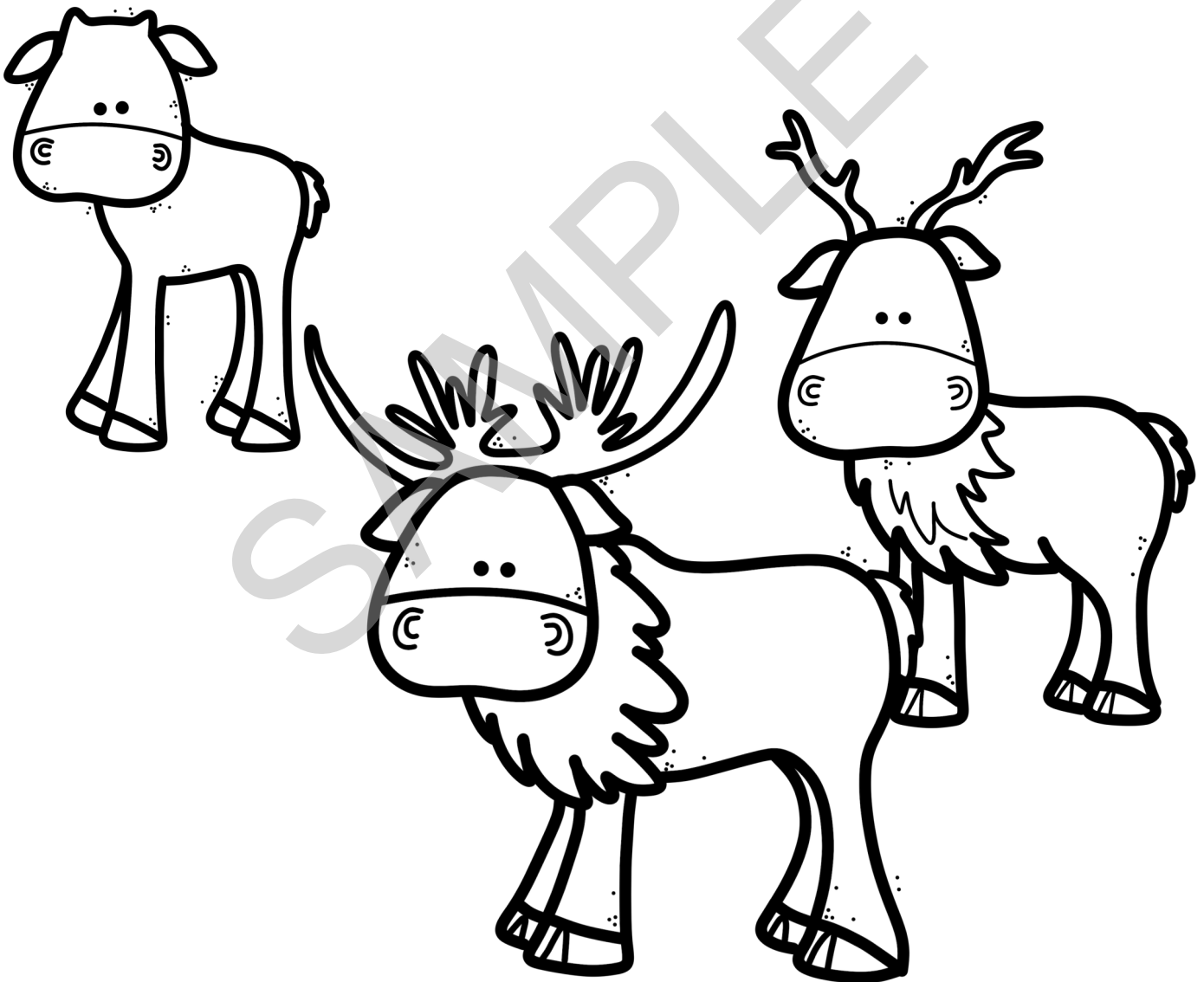
Arctic fox

**Reindeer** are a type of deer that live in the very northern parts of Europe and Asia. Reindeer are different from other deer in many ways. Their antlers are larger, their hooves are wider, and their coat is heavier. All these things make it easier for them to live in the cold arctic.

A young reindeer is called a **calf**. A calf is strong enough to follow its mother around after just one hour, and it can run faster than a person after just one day. Both male reindeer (called *bulls*) and female reindeer (called *cows*) have antlers, but the female's antlers are much smaller.

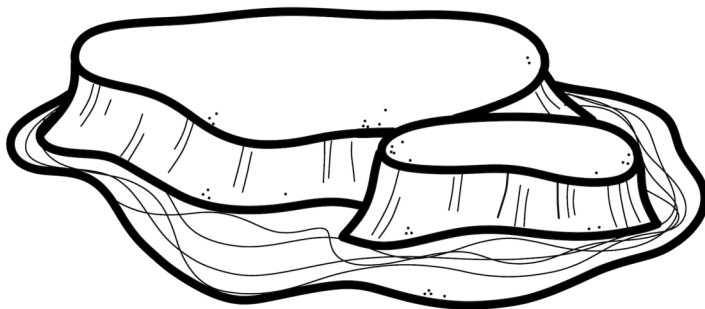


Calf

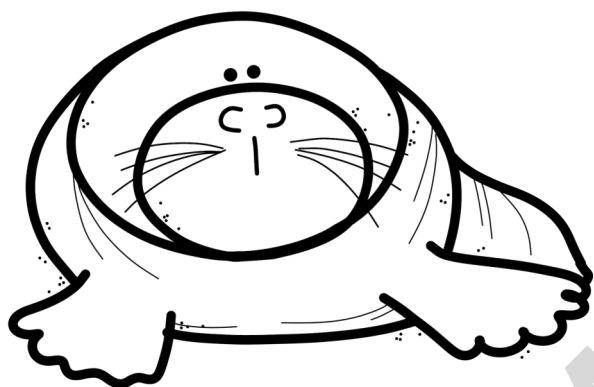


Reindeer

The **walrus** lives in the waters of the Arctic, North Atlantic, and North Pacific Oceans. A baby walrus is called a **calf**, and it is grayish-brown when it is born. It lives with its mother for several years.



As the walrus grows up, it turns to a rusty-brown color and develops tusks. Both male and female walruses grow tusks, but the male's tusks are longer and thicker.



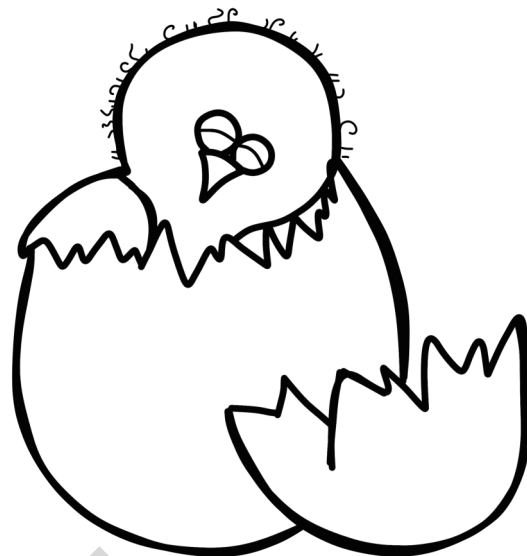
Calf



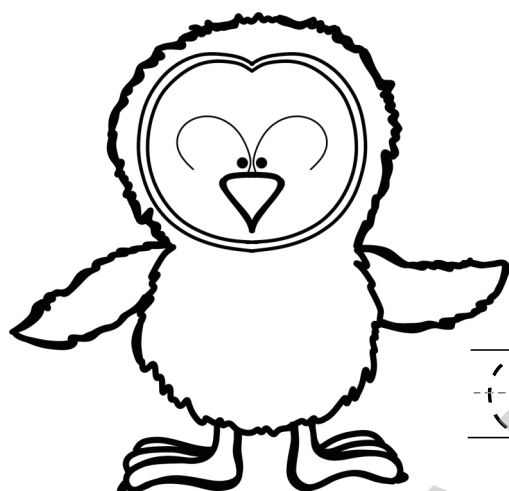
Walrus

**Barn owls** live in warm and moderate climates all around in the world. They live in barns, holes in trees, steeples, attics, and many other places. Barn owls lay around four to seven eggs in a nest, with two or three days in between each egg. When the owl hatches, it is called a **chick**.

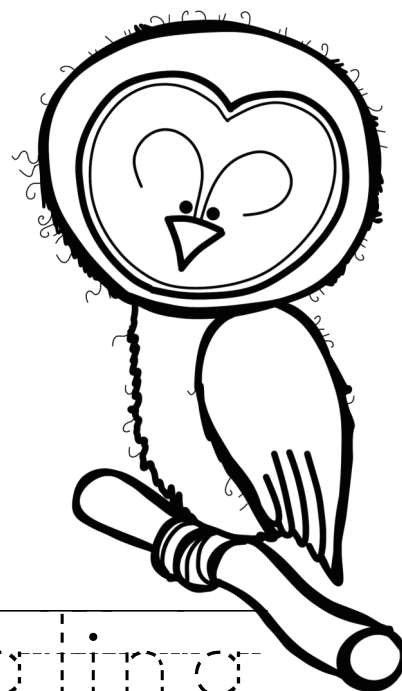
Next, the chick gets bigger and becomes an **owlet**. It still can't fly, and it will grow and lose coats of feathers. When its flight feathers finally grow in and it can fly, it is called a **fledgling**. An adult owl can live more than twenty years.



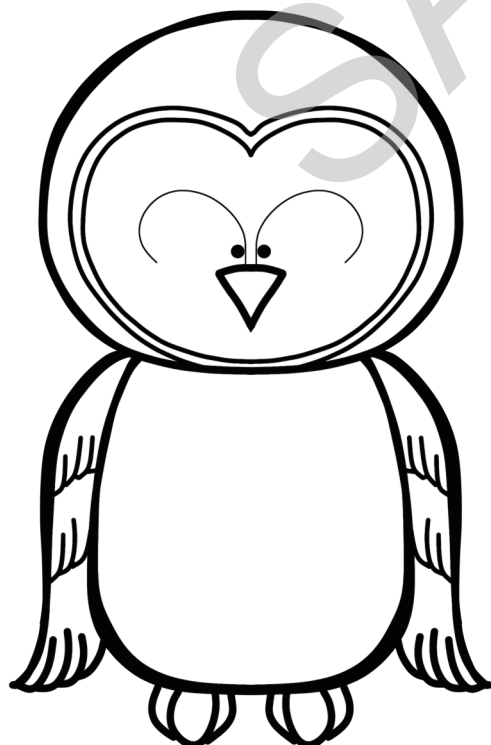
Chick



Owlet

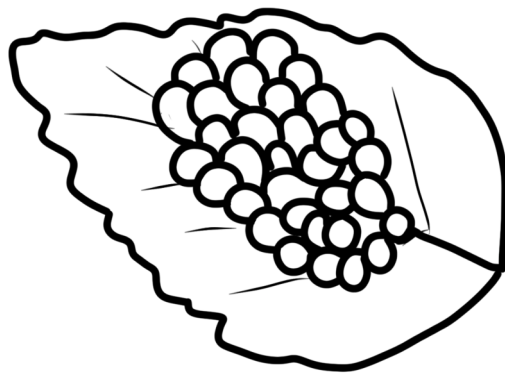


Fledgling



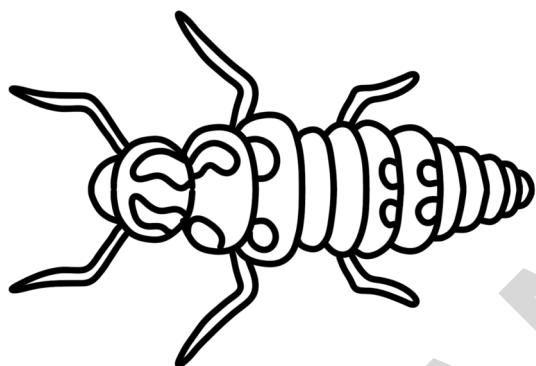
Barn owl

There are thousands of different types of **ladybugs**, and they live all around the world. Mother ladybugs lay their eggs on the underside of leaves, which is the perfect spot because there will be tiny bugs there for the babies to eat when they hatch.

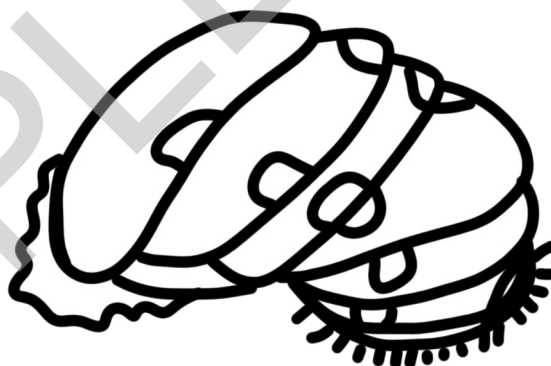


When the ladybug hatches, it is called a **larva**. Once the larva is big enough, it attaches itself to a leaf and looks like it has gone to sleep. During this time, the ladybug is a **pupa**, and it is changing into an adult ladybug.

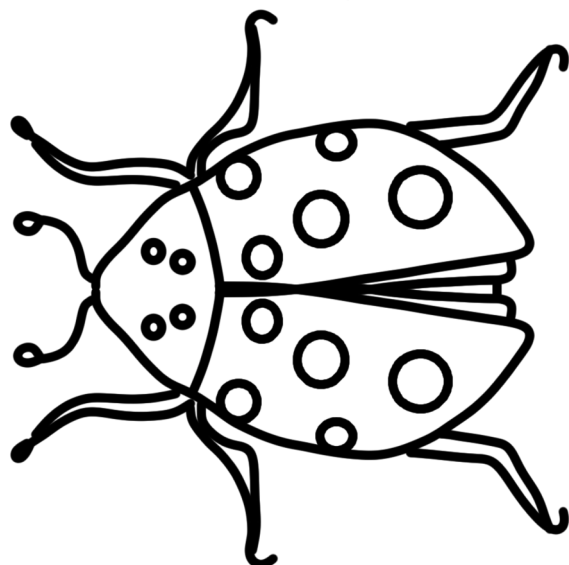
When the pupa is done growing, it will open up, and a ladybug will come out. A few hours later, its shell turns hard and bright red. The change is complete!



Larva



Pupa



Ladybug

## Review

Which animal does not have a pupa stage? Draw an X over it.



Mosquito



Honey bee



Barn owl

Which animal has babies called chicks? Draw a circle around it.



Penguin

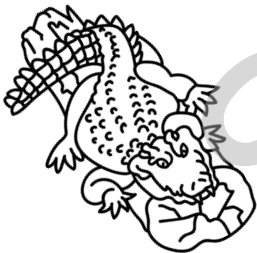


Arctic fox

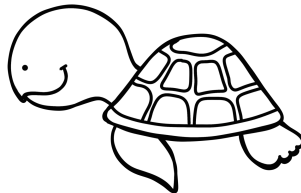


Rabbit

Which animal does not make its nest in the sand? Draw an X over it.



Crocodile



Sea turtle



Barn owl

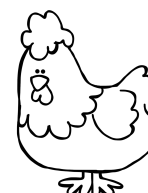
What animal has a baby called a kit? Draw a circle around it.



Butterfly



Rabbit



Chicken

## Review Answer Key

Which animal does not have a pupa stage? Draw an X over it.



Mosquito

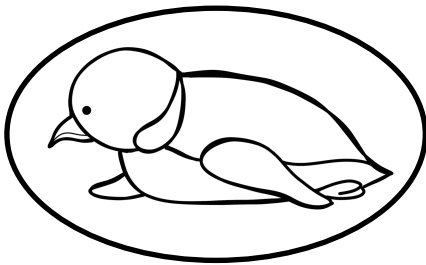


Honey bee



Barn owl

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Penguin

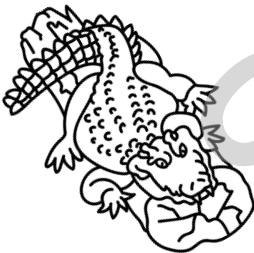


Arctic fox

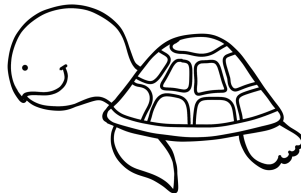


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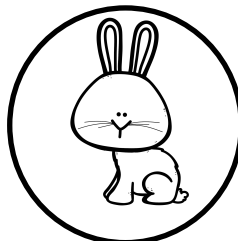


Barn owl

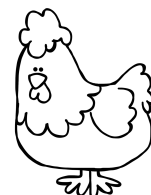
What animal has a baby called a kit? Draw a circle around it.



Butterfly



Rabbit



Chicken