

Comparing Life Cycles



Alabama Wildlife Federation Outdoor Classroom Field Journal Activity

To use this interactive PowerPoint with your students:

1. Click on “**Enable Editing.**”
2. Click the “**Slide Show**” tab at the top of the screen.
3. Then choose “**From Beginning**” from the menu.

Do all organisms have a life cycle?

First, what is an **organism**?

An organism is a living thing.

An organism could be a **plant** like a... ..or an **animal** such as a...



wildflower



bush



tree



human



salamander

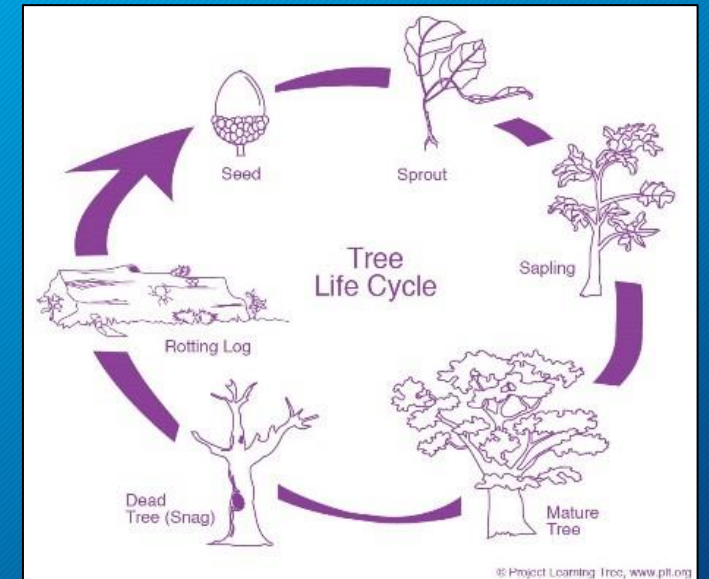
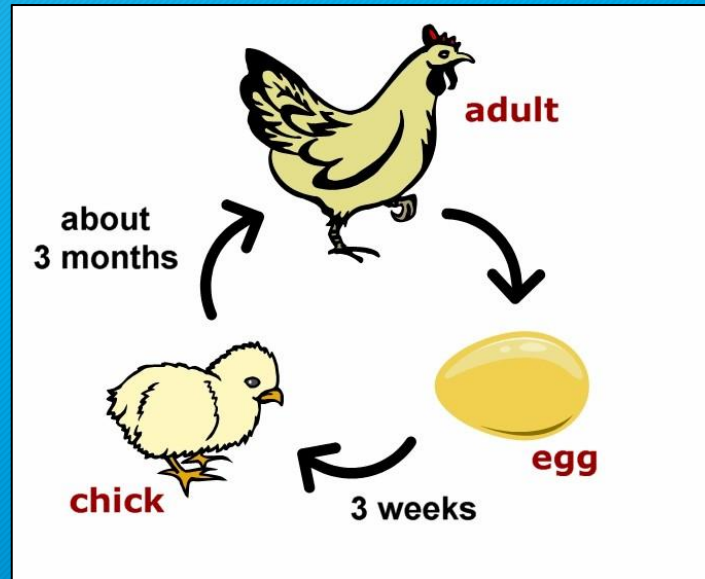


spider

Do all organisms have a life cycle? Second, what is a life cycle?

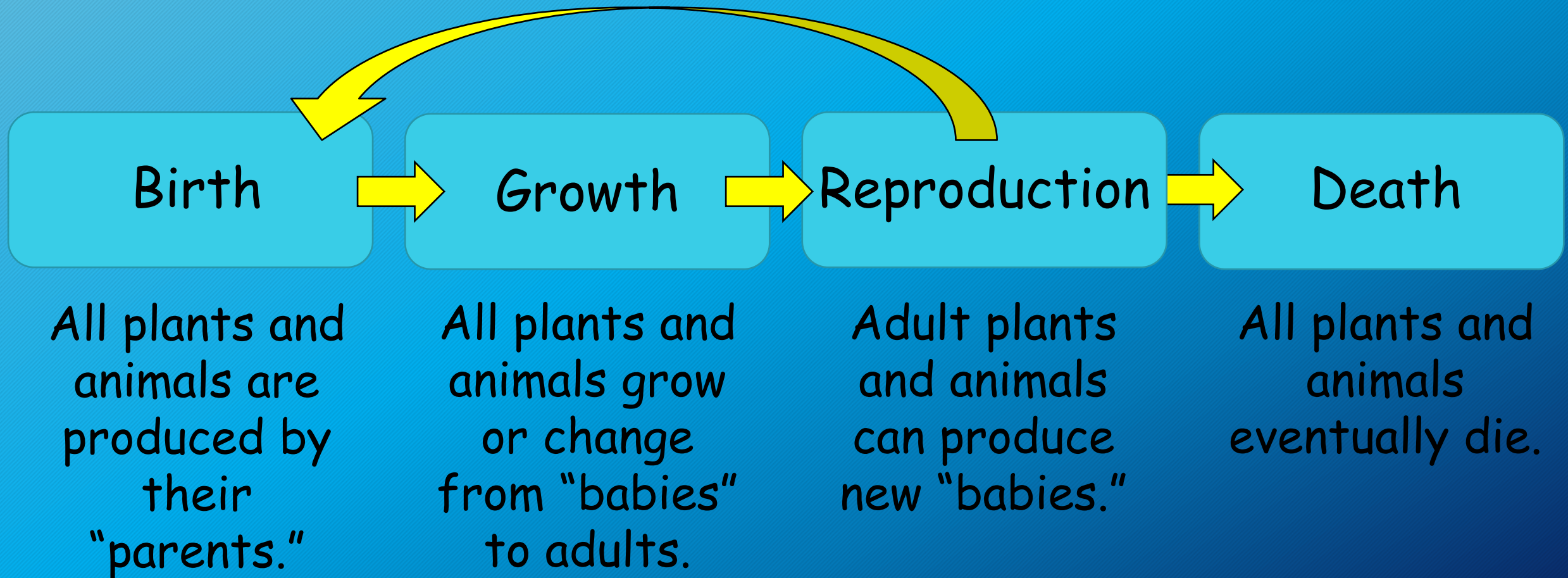
Hint: A cycle is a series of events that repeat in the same order.

A life cycle is the physical changes an organism (animal or plant) goes through during its life.



Yes, ALL organisms have a life cycle.

What do organisms' life cycles have in common?
How does the life cycle start? **What happens next?**



Are all animals born the same way that we are?
How are humans born? Do we hatch from an egg?



Humans have
live births from
their mothers
just like...

manatee
& other mammals.

Some animals do
hatch from eggs.

Do **humans** experience the same type of "growth" from a baby to an adult as other animals do?



black bears



corn snakes

Some animals (like humans) do not physically change very much. They are born with all of the same body parts as the adults have. They just grow larger.



box turtles

Do **all animals** experience the same type of "growth" from a baby to an adult?

NO! Although some animals change little as they grow larger, others go through a complete metamorphosis (change) as they "grow" into adults.

Common Buckeye Butterfly



Egg with caterpillar inside it



Caterpillar eats & grows



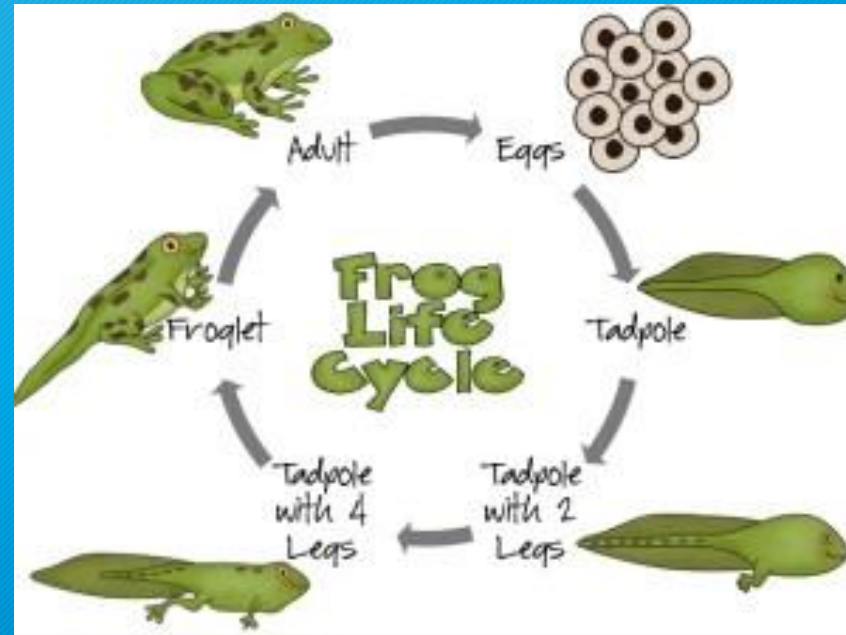
Caterpillar forms a chrysalis



Adult butterfly emerges from chrysalis

Another example of **metamorphosis** during "growth"...

Southern Leopard Frog



Do other animals take 15-20 years to grow and mature into adults like humans do?

No!



Humans
15-20 years



Dogs
18 months -
2 years



Eastern
Bluebirds
10-11
months



Eastern
Box Turtles
4-5 years



Southern
Leopard
Frogs
3-4 months



Common
Buckeyes
2-3 weeks

Do all animals complete their life cycles and die in the same amount of time?

No!



Humans
70-80 years



Dogs
10-15 years



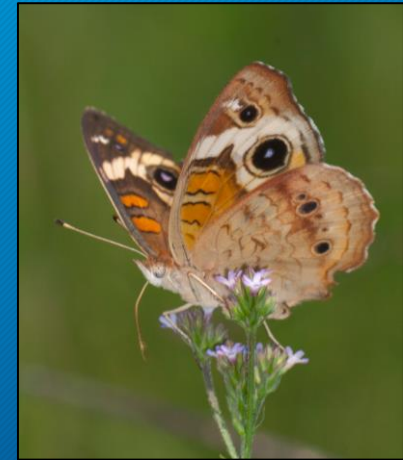
Eastern
Bluebirds
6-10 years



Eastern
Box Turtle
30-40 years

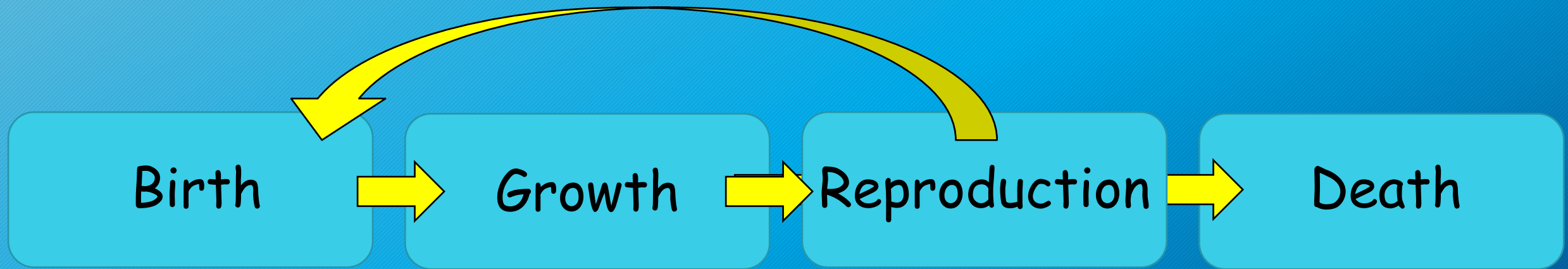


Southern
Leopard
Frogs
1-3 years



Common
Buckeyes
4-5 weeks

What happens if the adult animals die before they can reproduce?



For the life cycle to continue, adult animals must reproduce and "babies" must be born to grow into adults and continue the cycle.

Without reproduction, there are no births! Without birth, there is no growth!

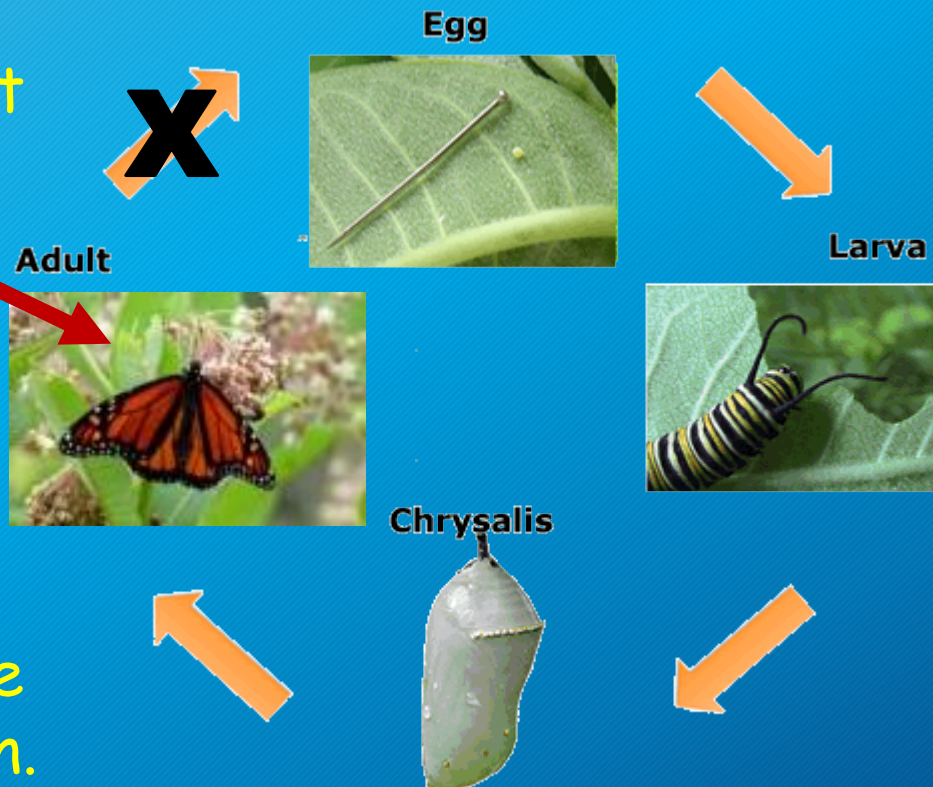
What happens if ALL of the adults of a species are unable to reproduce?

Then the population will decline and eventually go extinct.

For instance, monarch butterflies need a plant called milkweed to lay their eggs on.

Death

If they cannot find any milkweed, then they die before they can reproduce and the life cycle is broken.



Because milkweed is not easily found, the monarch population has declined by 90% in the past 20 years.

If you plant milkweed, you are helping the monarch butterflies continue their life cycle and grow their population.

What animals could we find in our outdoor classroom? Which part of their life cycle could we find?



Reptiles...
Five-lined Skink

Mammals...
Chipmunk

