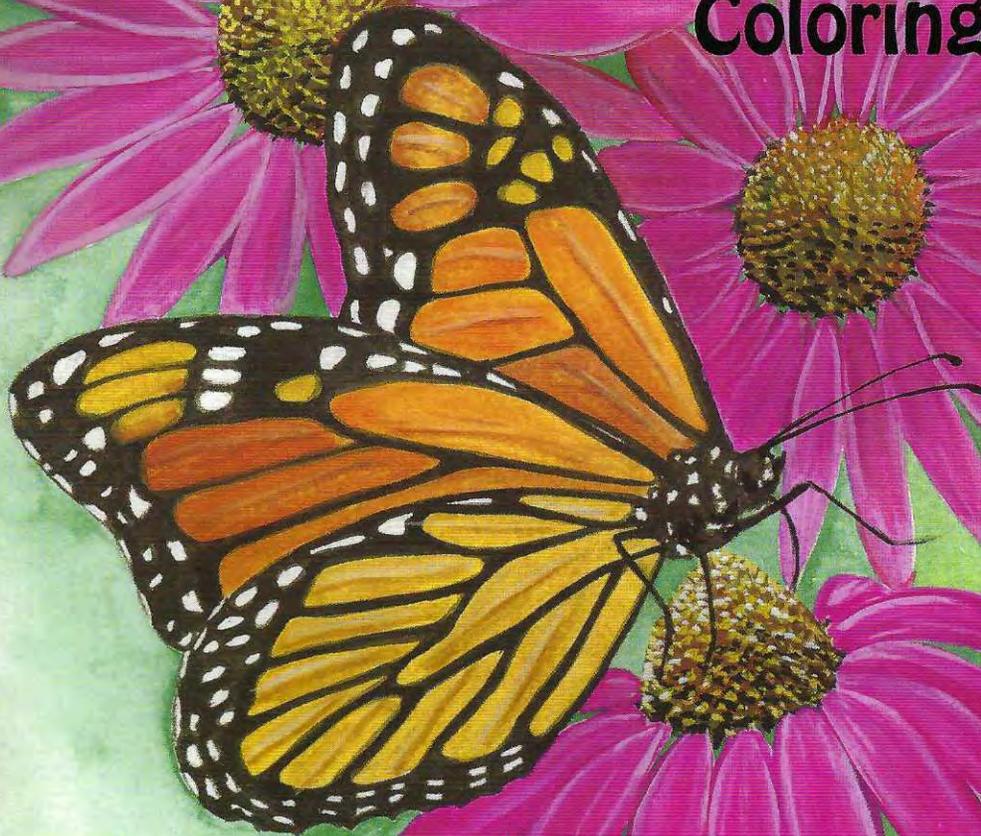


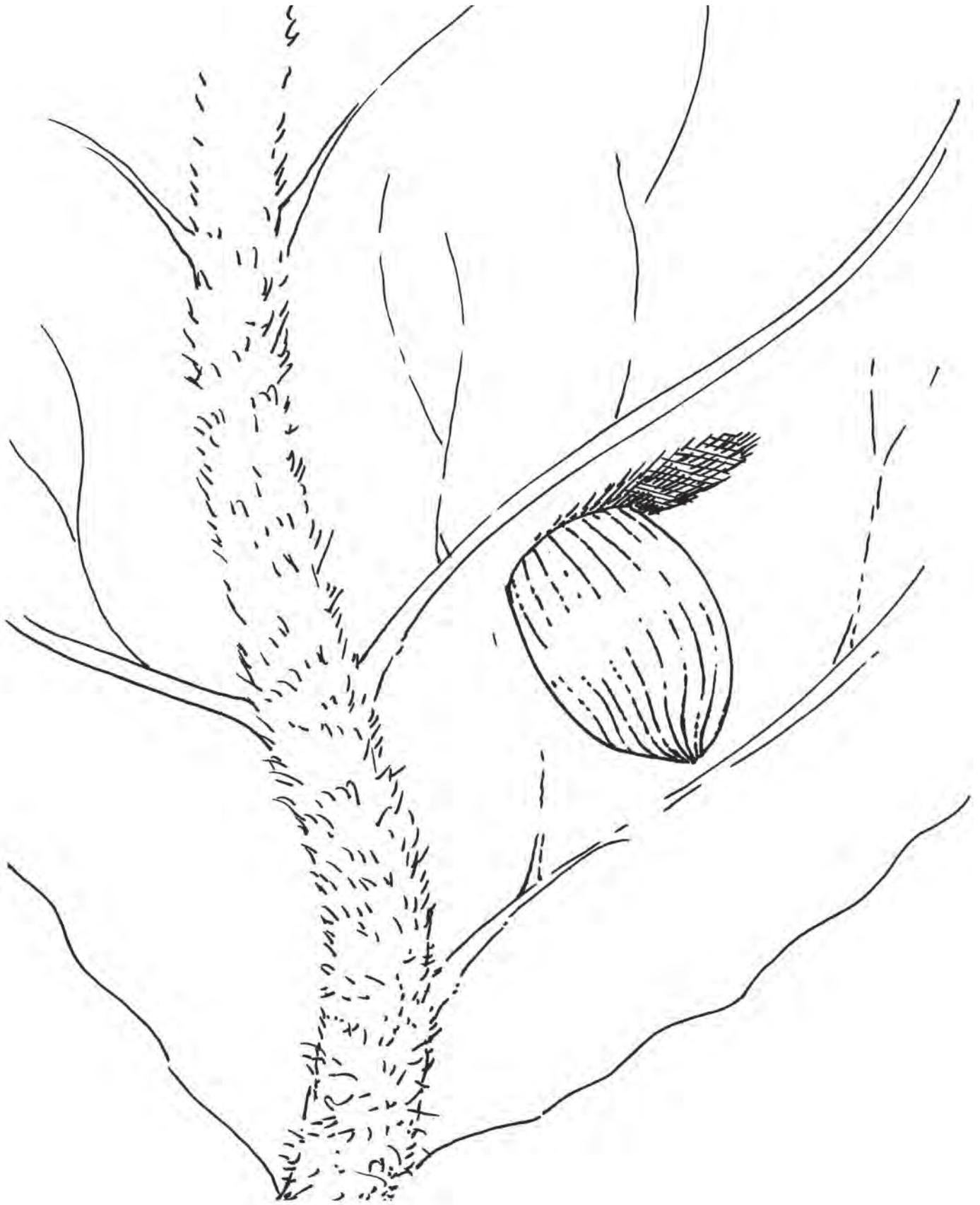
My  
**Monarch**  
**Butterfly**  
Coloring Book



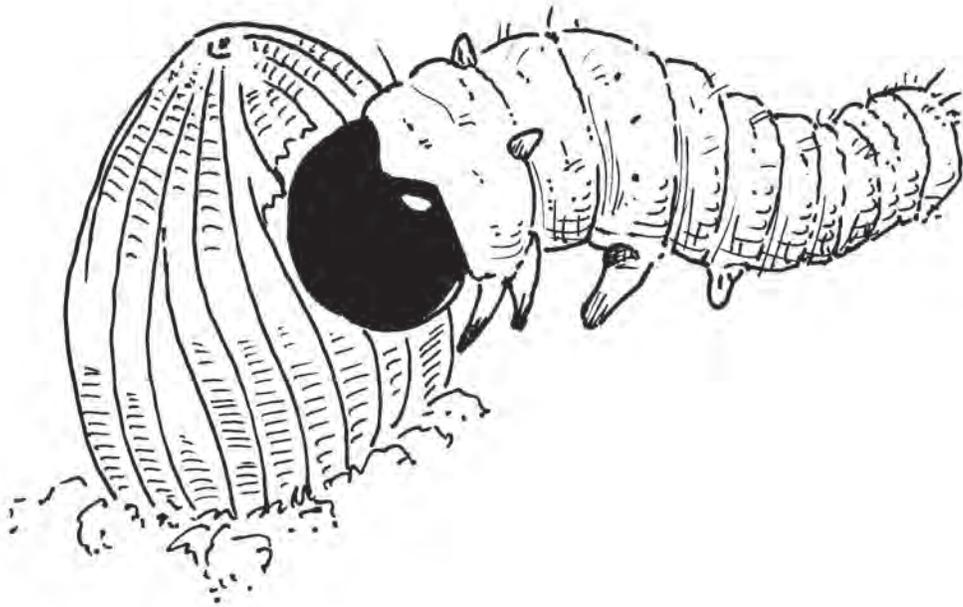
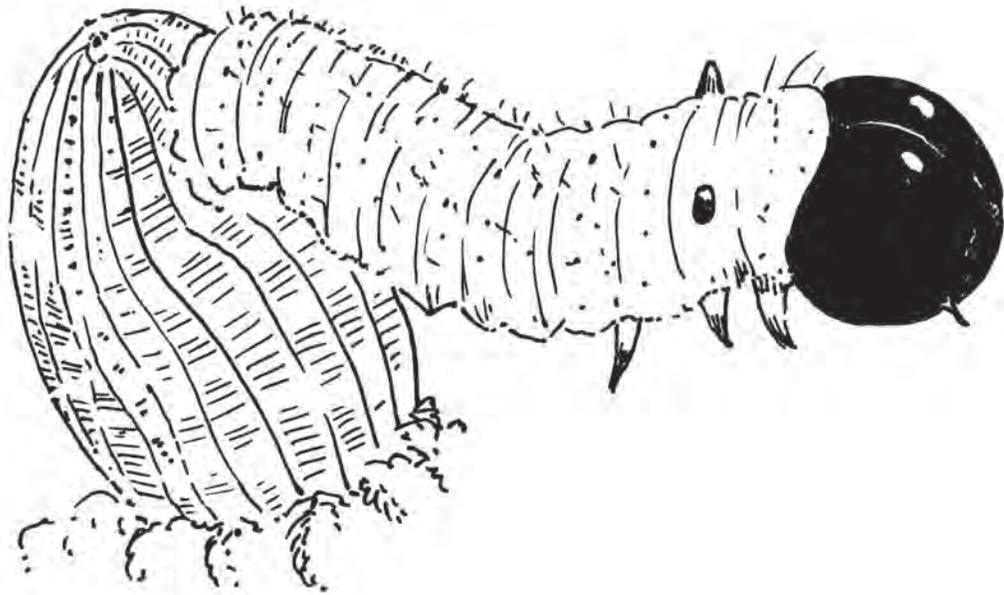
Illustrated by Claire Howard



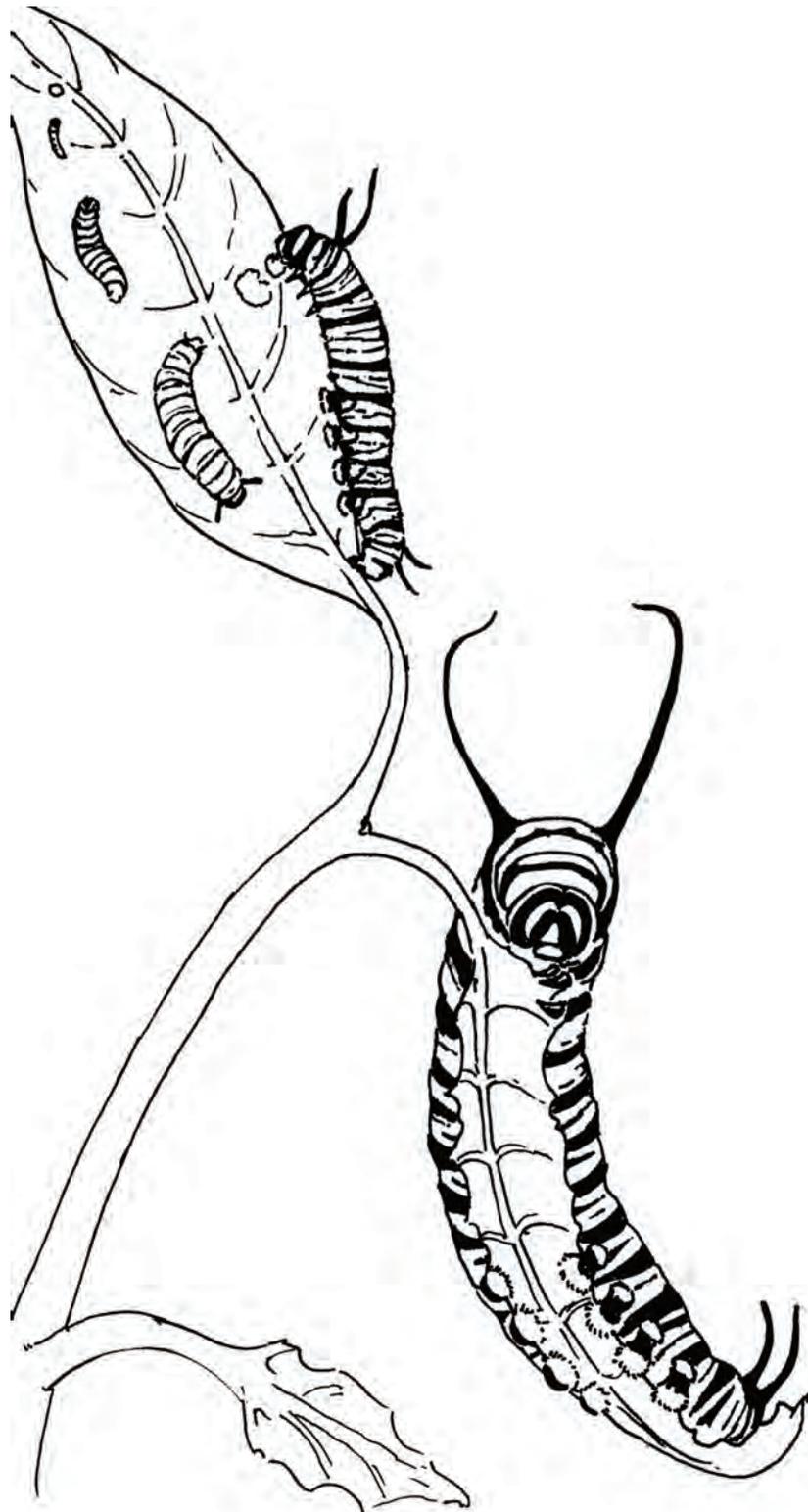
Female Monarch butterflies lay their eggs on the underside of a milkweed leaf. This is the only host plant that these caterpillars will eat.



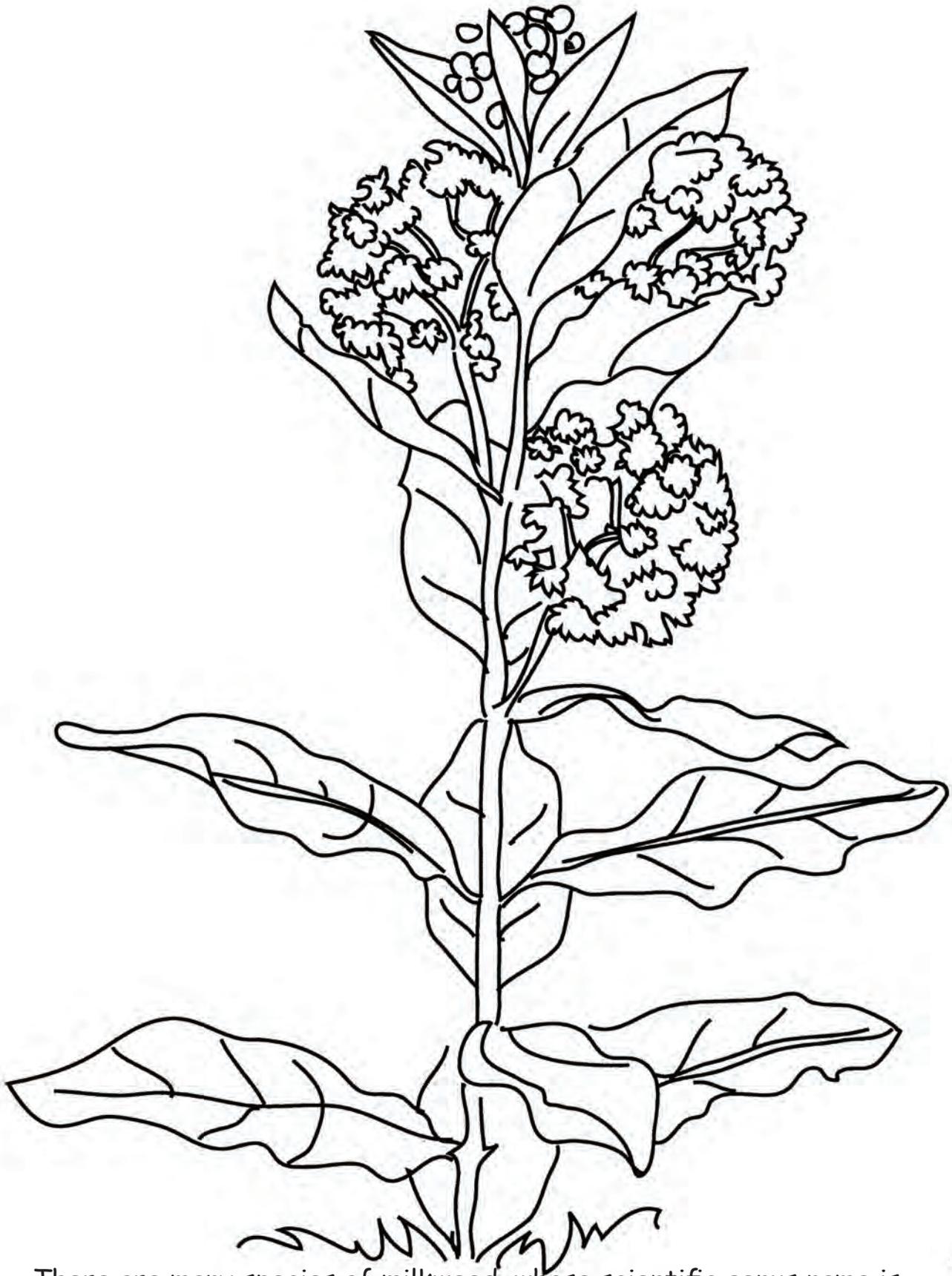
Usually only one creme-colored egg is laid on each milkweed plant so that the caterpillar will have enough to eat.



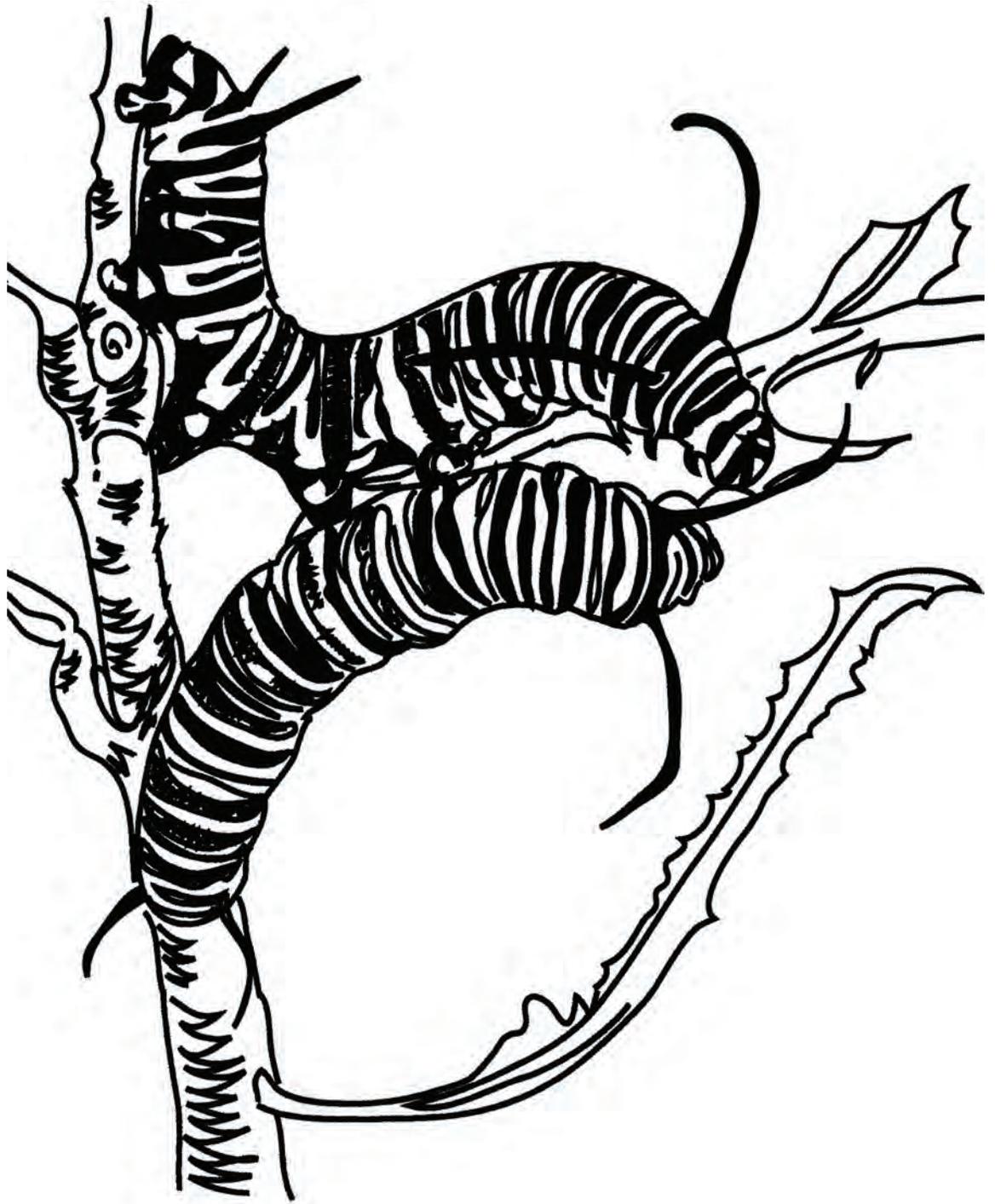
This close-up view shows a Monarch caterpillar as it emerges from its clear egg case two to four days after being laid. This tiny grey caterpillar's first meal is its egg case!



A Monarch caterpillar goes through five stages of growth that are called instars. With each instar stage, the caterpillar's appetite increases and it eats and eats until it outgrows its "skin" or exoskeleton.



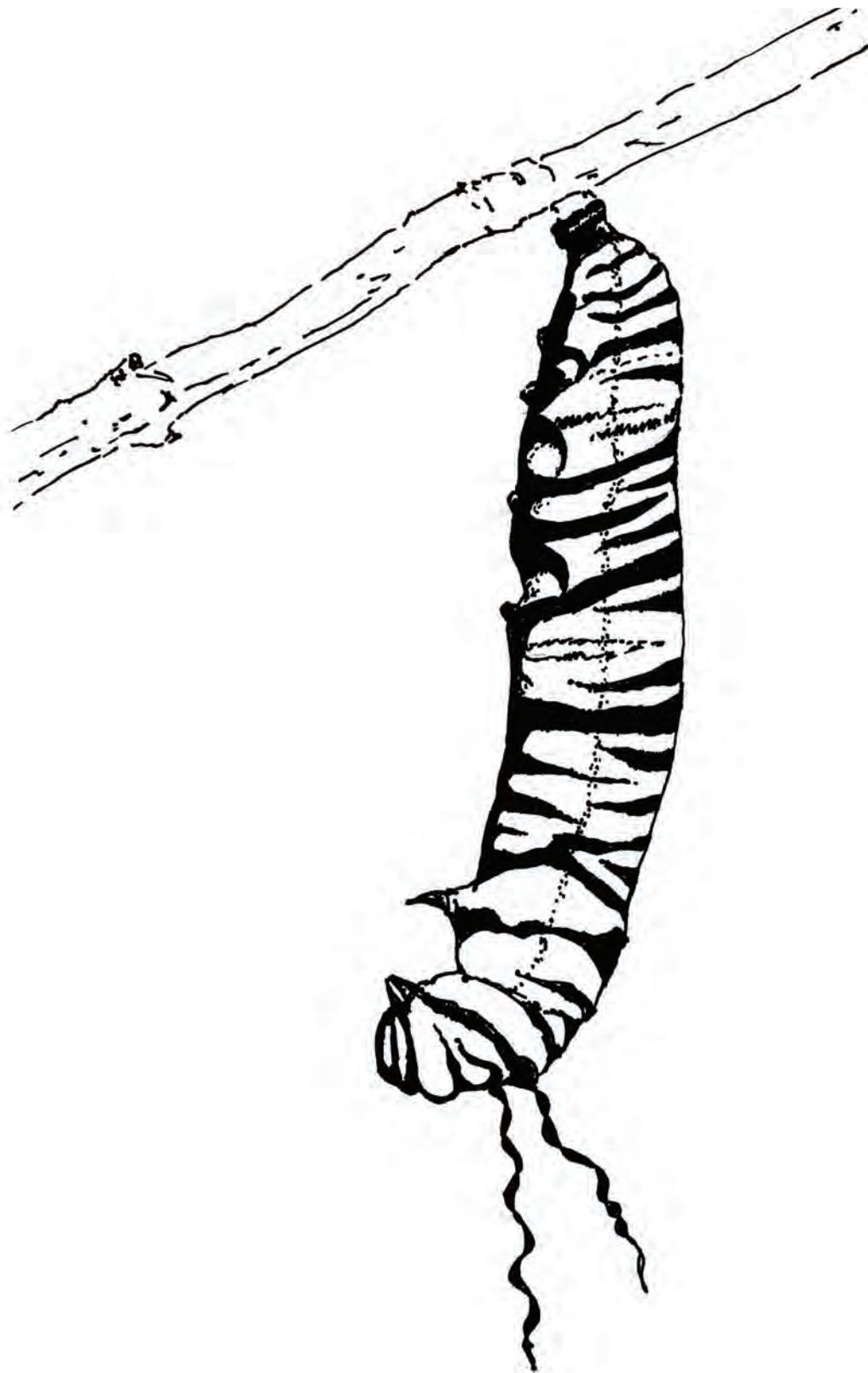
There are many species of milkweed, whose scientific genus name is *Asclepias*. This plant is Swamp Milkweed (*Asclepius incarnata*) which has pale pink blooms. Milkweed gets its name from the milky latex substance that oozes from the plant's leaves and stem when the surface is broken.



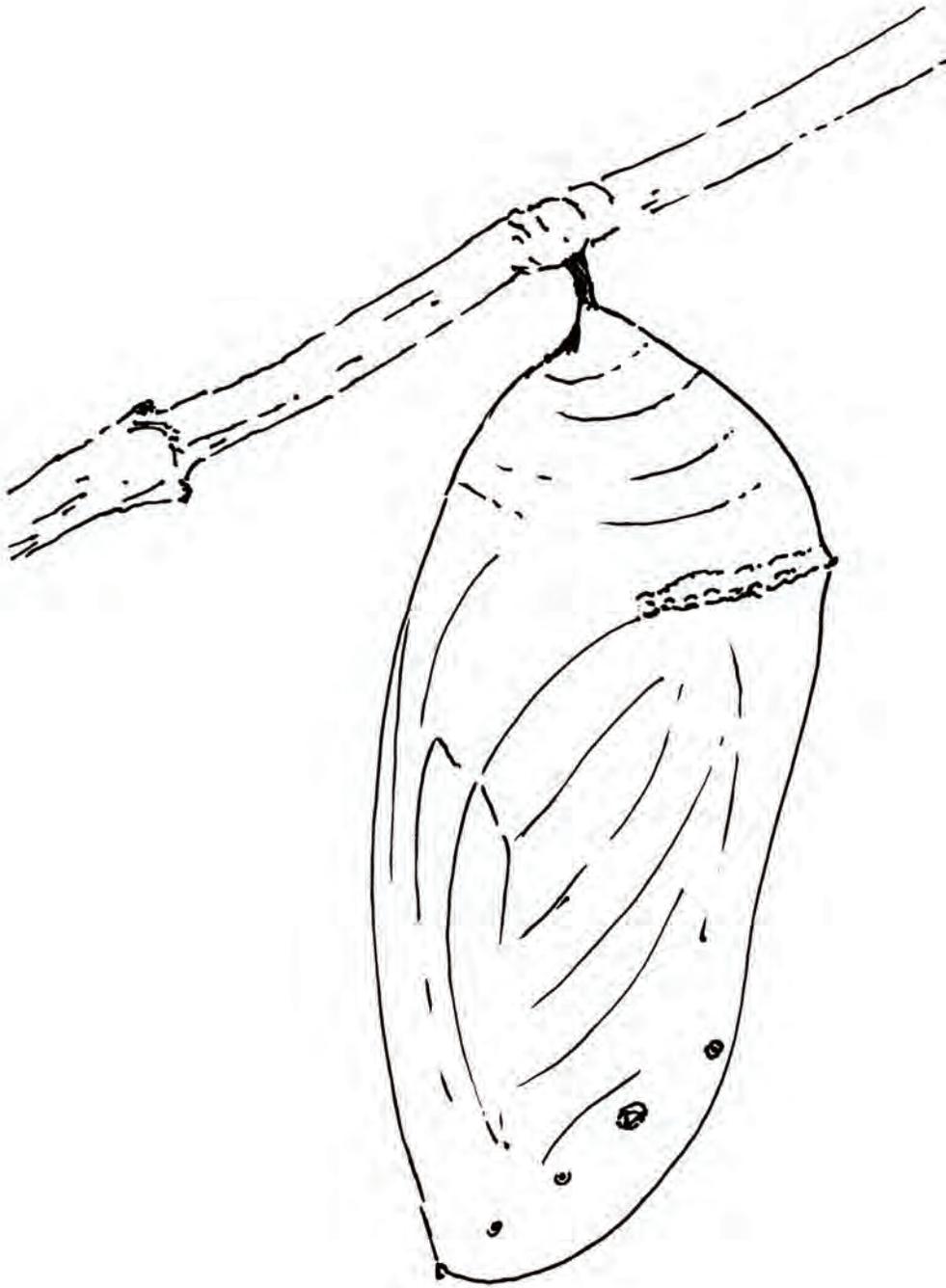
As the Monarch caterpillar eats milkweed, a toxin in the milky latex gives both the caterpillar and adult butterfly protection. The bright black, white and yellow stripes of the Monarch caterpillar warn "Don't eat me! I taste bad!"



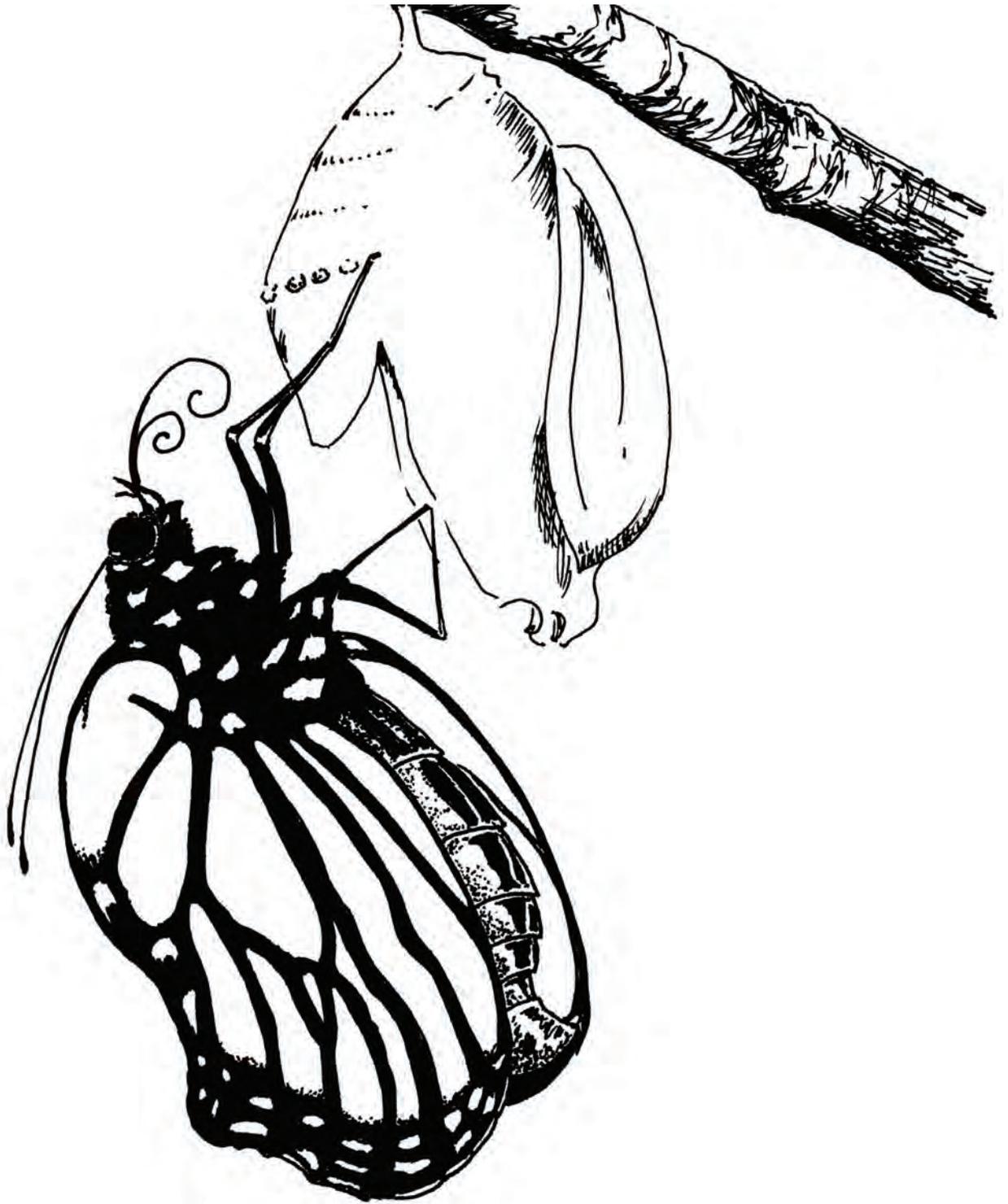
After about two weeks of eating, the caterpillar looks for a safe place away from the milkweed plant to begin its next stage. Here on a twig it has spun a silk pad and is hanging upside down in a "J" shape.



Observe carefully the caterpillar's subtle changes. A droopy body and limp tentacles alert us that a magical event is about to occur.



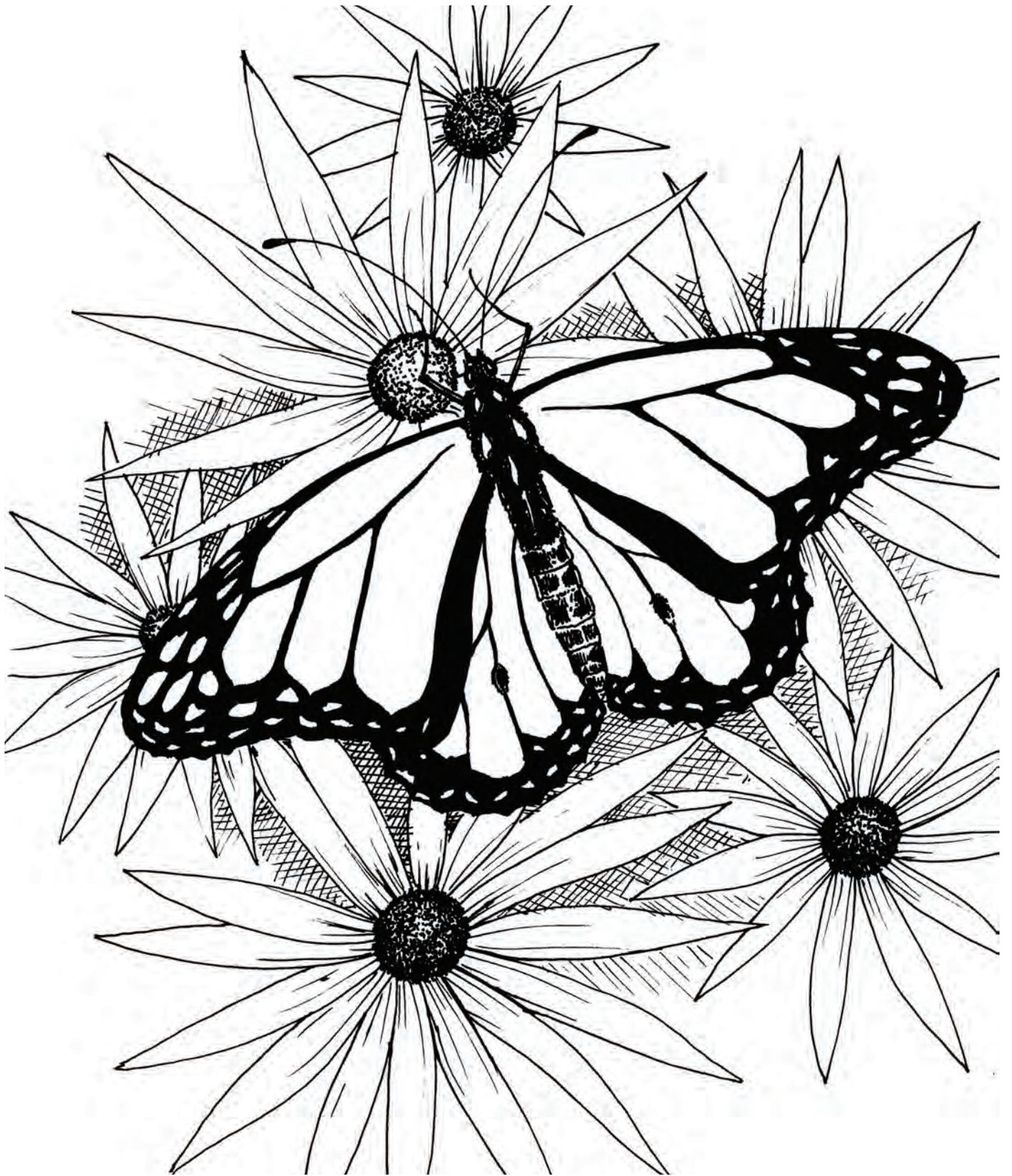
In just a few minutes, the caterpillar's striped "skin" is shed and its body changes into a mint green chrysalis decorated with gold flecks. It looks like a beautiful jewel.



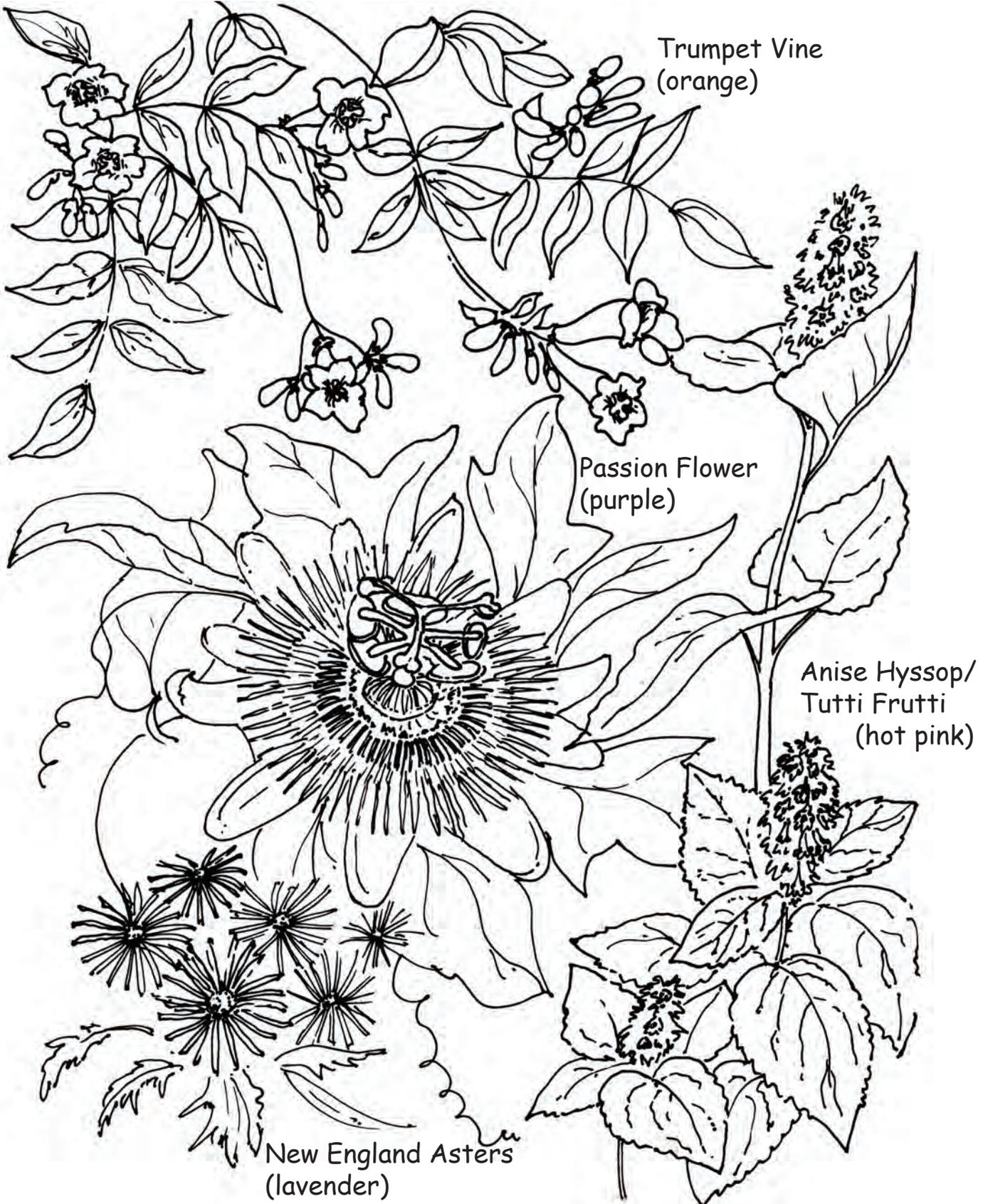
Many physical changes occur inside the chrysalis in the following 10-14 days. As the black, orange, and white colors become visible through the clear chrysalis, it indicates that a Monarch butterfly will soon be emerging. When it emerges, it pumps fluid from its abdomen into its wings then it hangs motionless until they have dried.



Notice the thickness of the veins on the wings of these female Monarch butterflies as they sip nectar from native Purple Coneflowers (*Echinacea purpurea*).



Observe the difference in the veins of male Monarchs. They are thinner than those of the female. Notice also the spots on their hind wings. This male is nectaring from native Black-eyed Susans (*Rudbeckia hirta*).



Trumpet Vine  
(orange)

Passion Flower  
(purple)

Anise Hyssop/  
Tutti Frutti  
(hot pink)

New England Asters  
(lavender)

Pollinator gardens provide host plants and nectar for a variety of species. Not only do butterflies benefit, but birds and bees do too!

Black-Eyed Susans  
(black and yellow)

Swamp Milkweed  
(pink)

"Wild" Verbena  
(lavender)

Purple Coneflower  
(pink)

Common Milkweed  
(purple-pink)





The Monarch butterfly migrates the greatest distance of any known North American butterfly, some traveling up to 2000 miles! Eastern Monarchs travel to the mountains of central Mexico to spend their winter. They return to the United States and Southern Canada in the spring.



Millions of Monarch butterflies can be seen hanging in clusters from the Oyamel fir (*Abies religiosa*) trees that grow on Mexican mountain-tops.

