



Eggs are yellow when first laid, but darken to purple-brown after about 12 days. Shortly before hatching eggs turn leaden grey in colour. This photo was also taken on 19 June 2013 and shows eggs laid earlier than those in the previous photograph. ©J.Harding



**First instar larvae** soon after hatching in late July. These beige-coloured larvae feed and live communally inside a protective web formed by the larvae drawing the leaves of the food plant together. This photograph was taken on 24 July 2017. ©J.Harding.





These **second instar larvae** are spinning a new web around part of the food plant. These larvae are a tan colour. This photograph was taken on 31 July 2017 .©J.Harding.



**Third instar larvae** from 22 September 2017. These are darker than the earlier stages. These larvae will soon spin a denser web usually concealed under the vegetation in which to pass the winter, protected against the harsh weather. Within this web, before winter arrives, they will moult for the third time to enter the fourth instar. ©J.Harding..





These are **fourth instar Marsh Fritillary** larvae after hibernation . They still form a web which is now used as a basking platform. These are now black with more prominent spikes, to deter birds. Their darker colouring enables the larvae to heat up more efficiently in bright but cool weather in February and March. The larvae are basking together to increase their body temperature to digest their food. At night and during unsuitable weather the larvae retreat under vegetation. This photo was taken on 14 March 2015.  
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**Fifth instar larvae** are black with white speckling. The fifth instar larvae live exposed on the vegetation and do not form a web. These feed in smaller and looser groups as the nest begins to break up. This photograph of recently moulted larvae was taken on 7 April 2018. ©J.Harding.





**A sixth instar Marsh Fritillary larva.** Mature larvae which show more prominent white speckling, feed independently. This one is fully grown and will soon form a pupa [chrysalis] in which it will undergo metamorphosis [change its shape] to become an adult butterfly. It is ready to pupate in late April-mid-May. This was taken on 28 Ap