

Danaus gilippus
Queen

Why Observe?

Queen butterflies are important pollinators for many flowering species. Like the monarch, queen butterfly caterpillars consume milkweed plants.



[TexasEagle via Flickr, CC BY-NC 2.0](#)

Tips for Identification

Forewings lack bold black lines, white spots on forewings are surrounded by orange. Forewing and hindwing generally the same shade of brownish-orange. Queen caterpillars have three sets of antennae, and are less uniformly striped than monarch caterpillars.

Be aware there is variation from individual to individual within a species, so your animal may not look exactly like the one pictured. If you are uncertain whether or not a phenophase is occurring, report a "?" for its status until it becomes clear what you are observing after subsequent visits.



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Adults

One or more adults are seen moving about or at rest.



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Adults feeding

One or more adults are seen feeding with their straw-like tongue (proboscis). If possible, record the substance and species on which they are feeding (for example, nectar, sap, dung, or moist soil) in the comments field. For *Danaus gilippus*, adults feed on the flower nectar of many different plant species.



[Anne Toal via Flickr.](#)
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Mating

A male and female are seen coupled in a mating position, usually end to end. This can occur at rest or in flight.



Image Needed

email
photos@usanpn.org

Egg laying

A female is seen laying eggs on a plant or other surface. If possible, record the name of the plant or describe it in the comments field. For *Danaus gilippus*, eggs are typically deposited on the leaves of milkweed plants.



Image Needed

email
photos@usanpn.org

Eggs

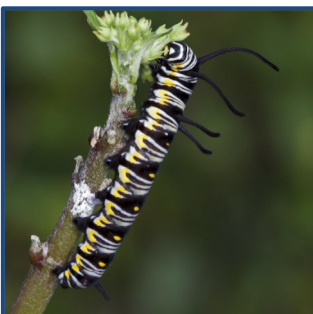
One or more eggs are seen on a plant or other surface. If possible, record the name of the plant or describe it in the comments field. For *Danaus gilippus*, the tiny, ribbed, dome-shaped eggs are pale green to white in color, and are typically found on the leaves, stems or flower buds of milkweed plants.



[Joshua Tree NP via Flickr.](#)
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Caterpillars

One or more caterpillars (larvae) are seen moving about or at rest. When seen on a plant, if possible, record the name of the plant or describe it in the comments field. For *Danaus gilippus*, young caterpillars are pale green with a black head. Older caterpillars have three pairs of black tentacles (sometimes reddish where they meet the body) and black, yellow and white stripes around their body.



[Richard Crook via Flickr.](#)
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Caterpillars feeding

One or more caterpillars are seen feeding. If possible, record the name of the species or substance being eaten or describe it in the comments field. For *Danaus gilippus*, caterpillars typically feed on the leaves of milkweed plants.



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Pupae

One or more pupae are seen in a cocoon or shell (puparium). For *Danaus gilippus*, pupae are enclosed in a pale green (sometimes pinkish) translucent shell (chrysalis) that appears darker as the butterfly develops, and hang from plants or other outdoor surfaces. Do not include empty pupal shells after the adult has emerged from them.

Phenophases not pictured: Flower visitation, Migrating adults, Dead adults, Dead caterpillars