

# INSTRUCTIONS FOR PAINTED LADY KITS



## Arrival Day:

- \* Start by showing the students how small the larvae are. At this stage your cats are three to five days old.
- \* Put your caterpillar food in the fridge.
- \* **It's not necessary to transfer larvae immediately when you receive them. We recommend you wait a few days after receiving the larvae to do the transfer as there is plenty of food.**
- \* The cats will soon appear darker and active. This is the best time to transfer them. Do not transfer the caterpillars if they are motionless as they may be going through an instar. This is when they moult their skin and grow. They don't like to be disturbed at this point so you can wait another day or two.

## HOW TO CARE FOR YOUR CATERPILLARS (LARVAE) (CATS)

### Transferring Larvae:

- \* Take your caterpillar food out of the fridge.
- \* Count the number of caterpillars and divide the food evenly. There should be 25 to 27 for the Class kit, 15 to 17 for the Home kit, 10 to 12 for the Starter kit. There is enough food provided for all and a little extra as well.
- \* Wipe the condensation off the food with a clean paper towel. Using a knife, cut the food into chunks evenly to the number of cats you have and divide it between the small containers. Transfer the food first, then using the paintbrush, transfer the larvae. Then place the paper over the container and close the lid tightly. The paper and the three drilled holes in the lid are for best moisture control. (No extra holes are required.)
- \* If you have extra cats you can place two cats in one container and just add an extra chunk of food. You may also use the container and food in which they arrive as extra food for any extra larvae. We ship a few extras in case of losses. If you experience losses of 30% or more please contact us immediately. Handle the larvae as little as possible especially during an instar or pupation.
- \* Remember to keep the lids securely on at all times as they are little escape artists.
- \* Take care not to shake or tip the container after the food and caterpillars are placed inside so the food does not roll on top of the little critters.
- \* We do not recommend that you assign one caterpillar to each student. This project is best enjoyed as a group learning experience.

## CATERPILLARS GROW BIGGER

- \* Please leave the containers on a shelf at room temperature **away from direct sunlight**. Sunlight will cause condensation and excess moisture which is not healthy for the caterpillars.
- \* The caterpillars will keep on eating the special diet, which is a combination of soy, wheat germ and other nutrients for a several days. Caterpillar droppings look like little balls and are also know as "frass."
- \* When the caterpillar has eaten **more than half it's food** you can sweep out the webbing and the frass. Make sure to leave the remaining food. You may rest the caterpillar on the lid while you do this sweeping. Make sure to put the paper back under the lid for humidity control. If you need to replace the paper (if it gets too wet or torn) use clean, dry coffee filter paper. We recommend you sweep out the frass at least twice to keep the frass from covering the food.