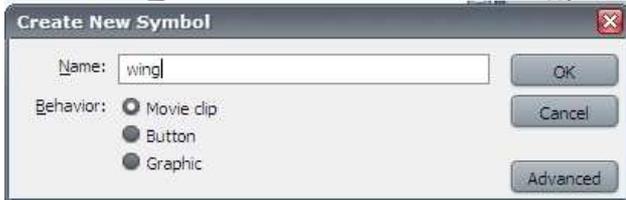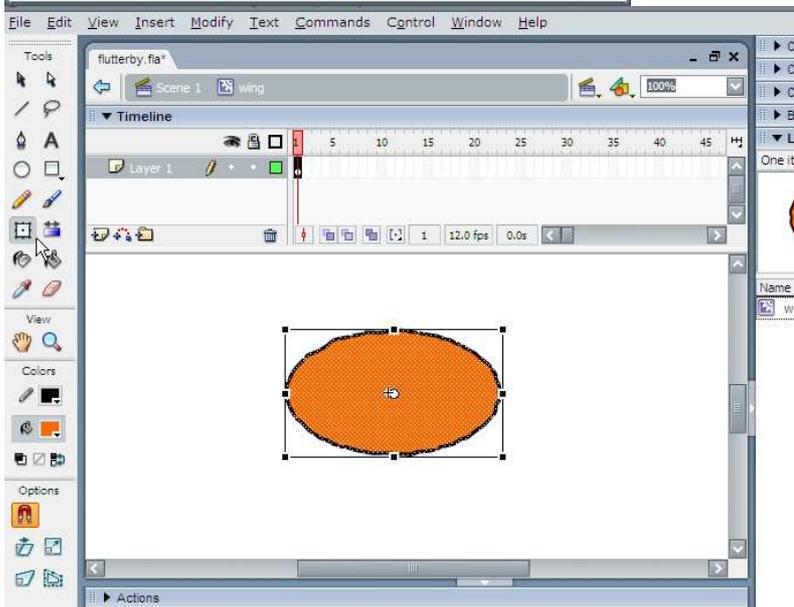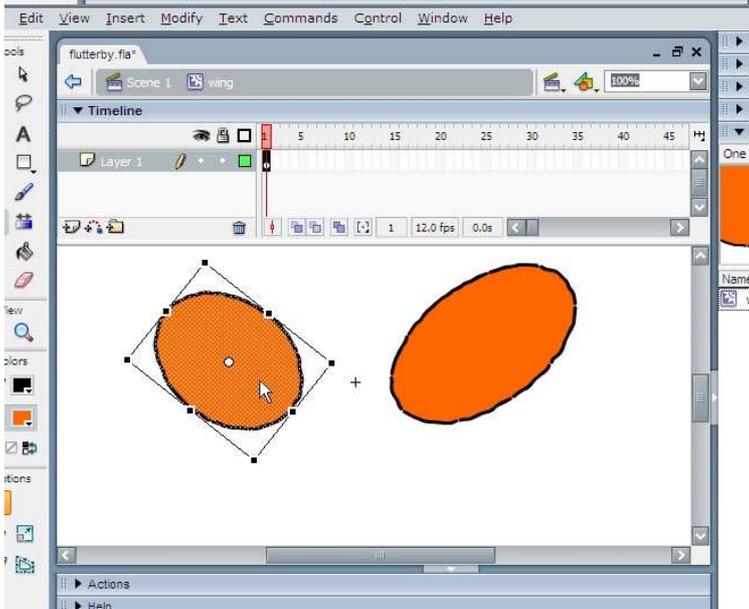Start by adding a NEW SYMBOL into your LIBRARY

Name it "wing"
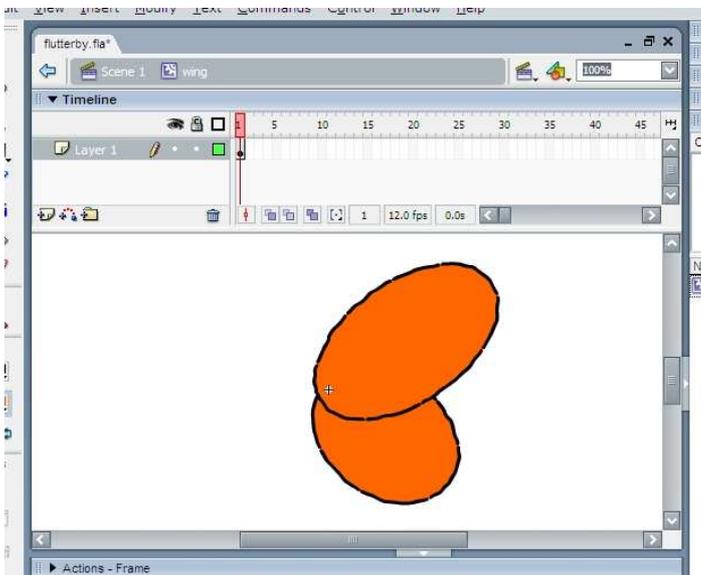
To SHOW your LIBRARY, press CONTROL+L

Pick a FILL COLOUR, STROKE(line) COLOUR and THICKNESS and then draw an oval

Double-Click on your oval and select the SPIN AND SKEW tool to make the top lobe of your wing.
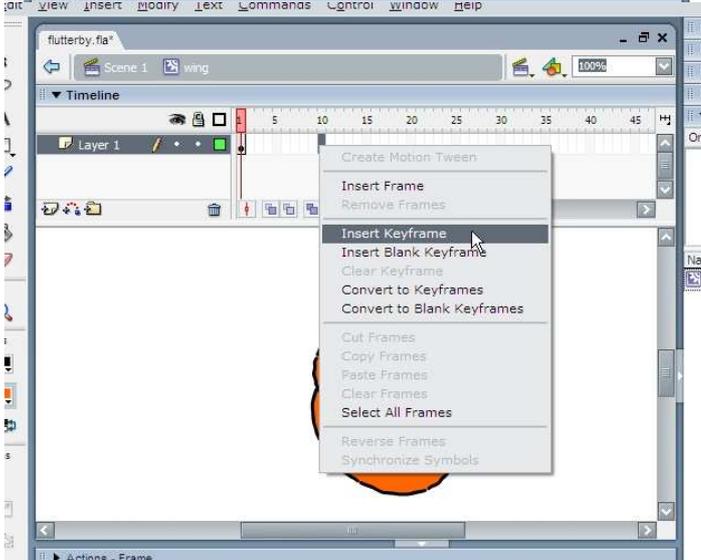
Duplicate the oval (CONTROL+D) and spin it in the opposite direction to make the second wing lobe.

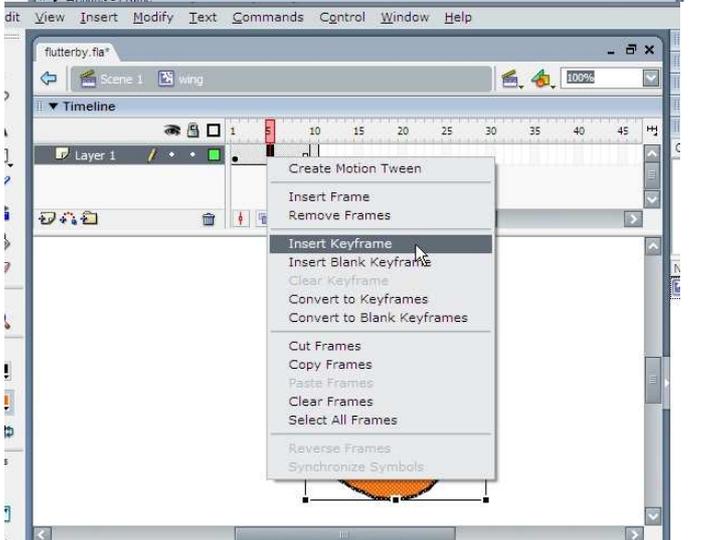Drag the TOP wing lobe OVER the BOTTOM lobe to get the overlap right

Take care, these shapes will damage each other
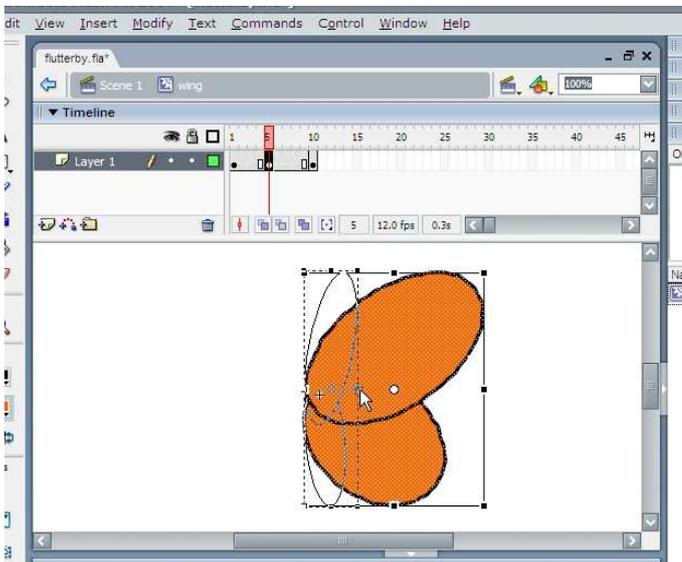
Align then using the guides

Go To FRAME 10 and insert a KEYFRAME

The animation should start and finish the same (so it loops seamlessly)
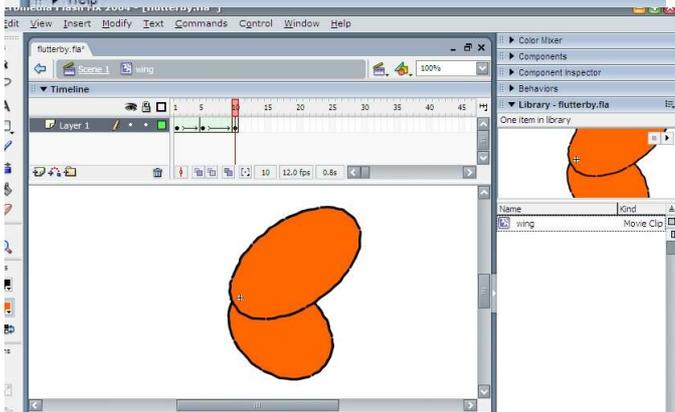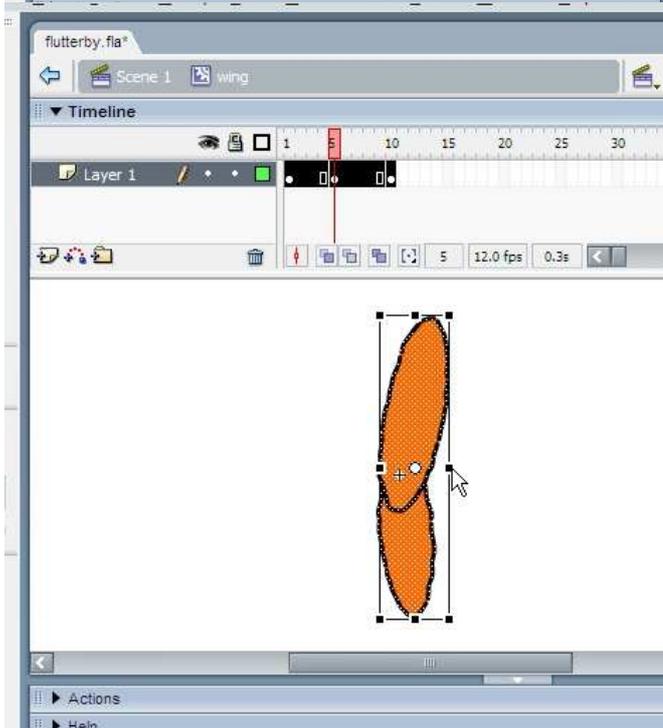
Go to FRAME 5 and add a KEYFRAME

At FRAME 5, use the STRETCH tool and PULL the RIGHT edge of the wing in to make it look like it is in mid-flap
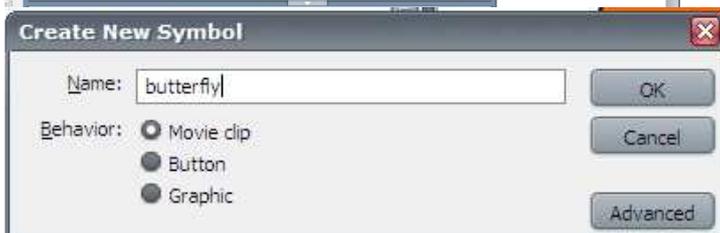

Select the WHOLE LAYER

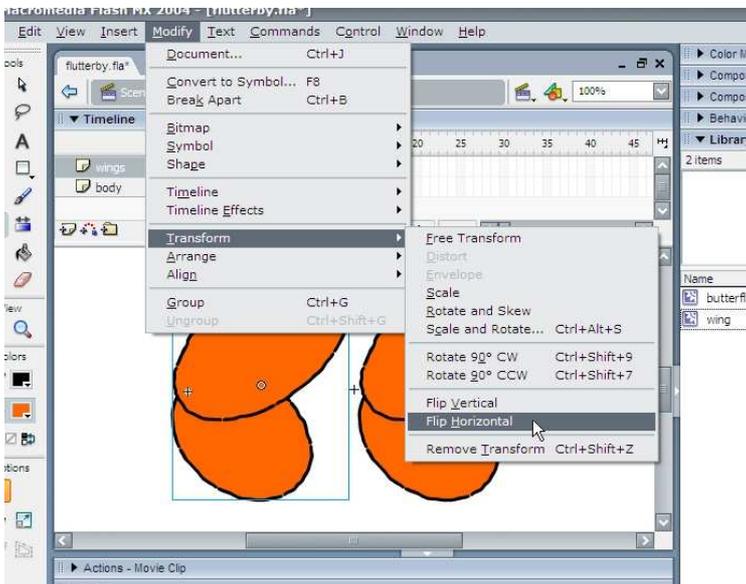Apply a SHAPE TWEEN to the layer – GREEN arrows will indicate this is successful.

Press enter to preview the flap animation.

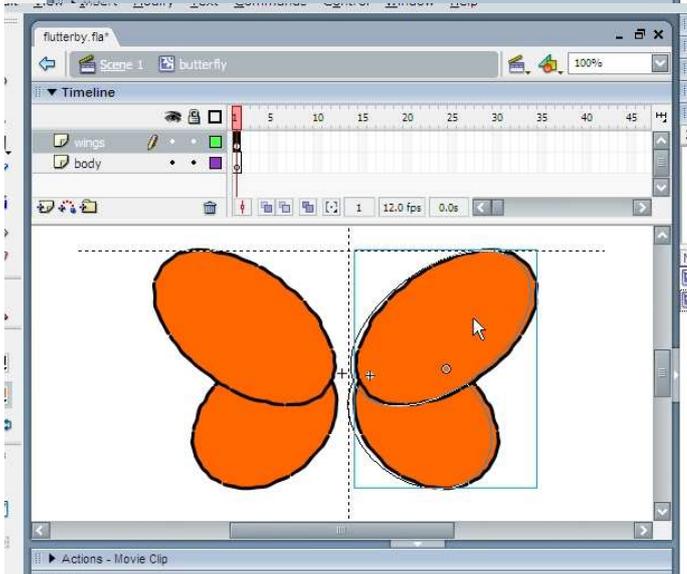You now have a completed COMPONENT of the finished butterfly (we will use 2 of these later for the wings

Now to create the butterfly. Create a NEW SYMBOL, call it "butterfly"
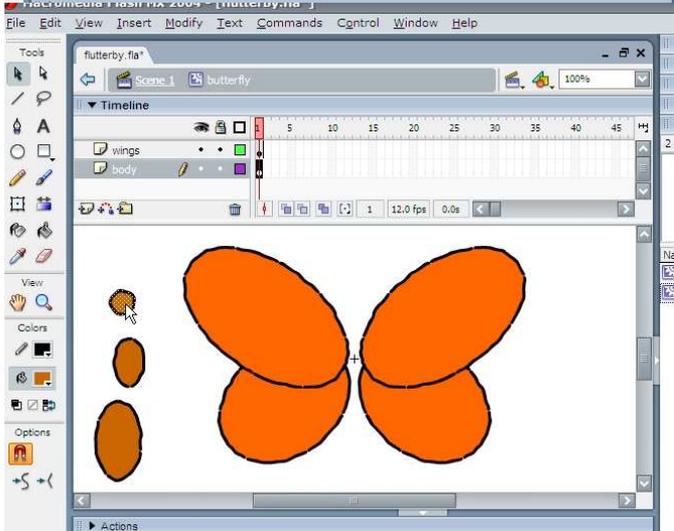
2 LAYERS – "wings" and "body"

Drag 2 library wings into frame 1 of the wings layer

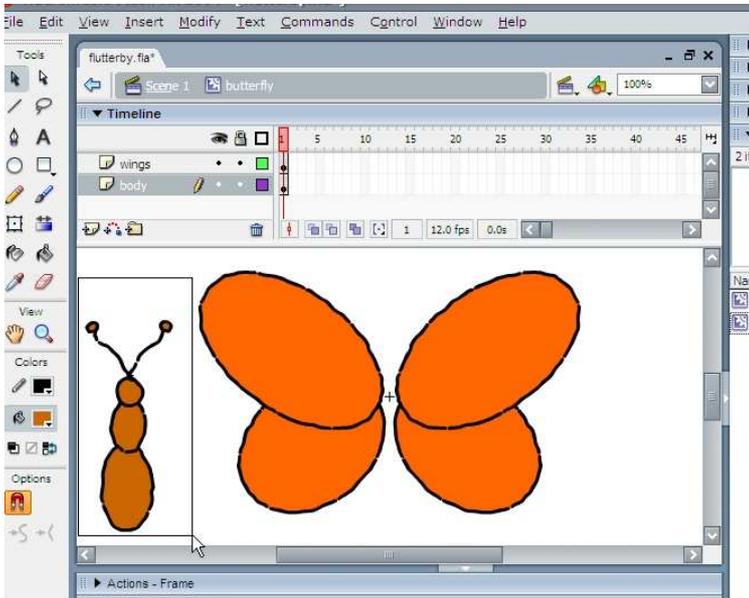With the second wing FLIP IT HORIZONTALLY

Drag your wings so they are aligned and slightly apart

On the "body" layer, draw 3 ellipses – head, thorax and abdomen.

Draw them apart from each other initially, you will be moving them together once you have the proportions right.

Stack the body segments carefully and then draw a single ANTENNAE, duplicate and flip it horizontally to make a pair.
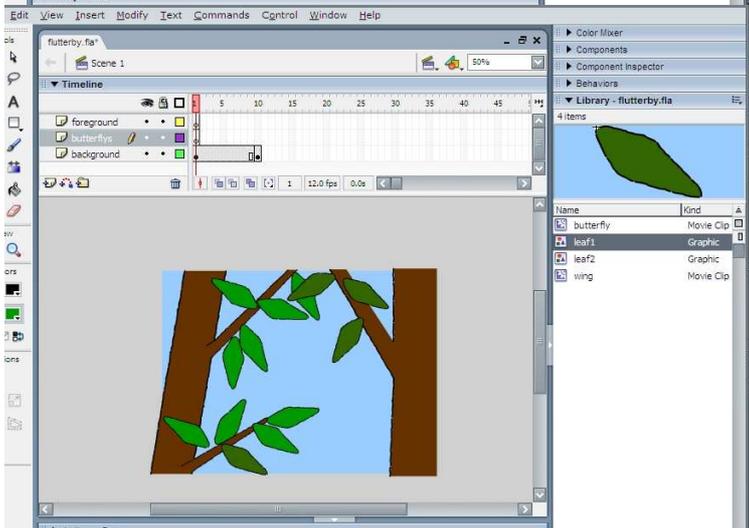
Carefully position them on the body

HINT: move these parts around using the ARROW KEYS, it is a little more accurate and responsive.
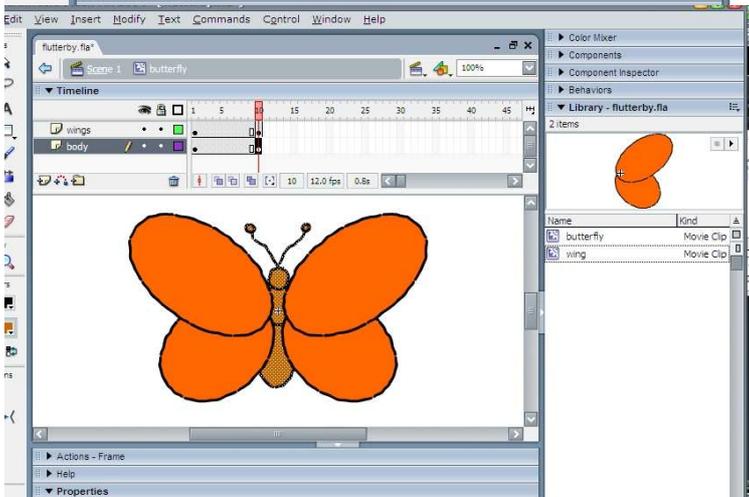
Go to each layer, extend them by adding KEYFRAMES at frame 10

You now have a finished butterfly in your LIBRARY

Return to your SCENE

In your SCENE, create 3 layers: "background", "butterflies" and "foreground"

In the "background" layer, draw some foliage. Extend this layer by adding a KEYFRAME at frame 10

I have made leaf library items to make this simpler, and to allow me more easily later (should I decide to) to animate them, gentle swaying in the breeze perhaps
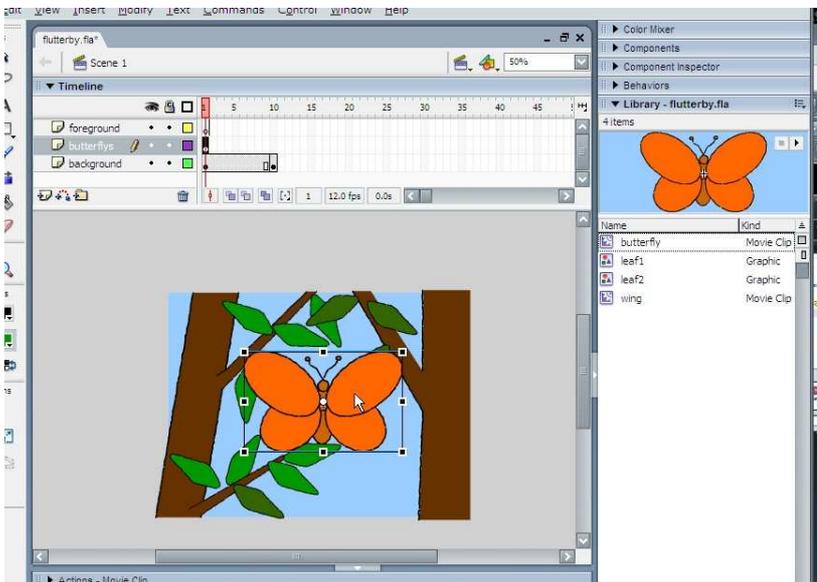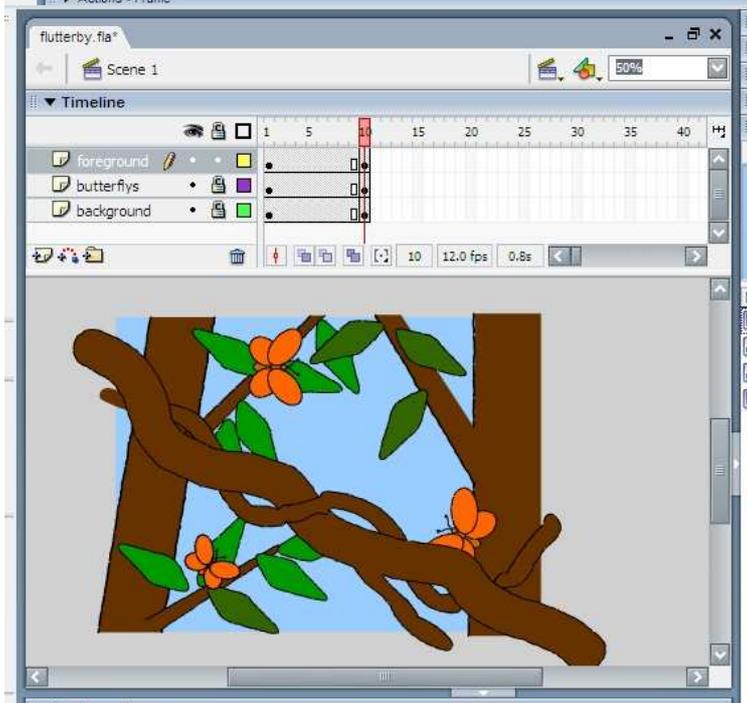
In your "butterflies" layer, drag a butterfly from the library

Use stretch and spin to size and rotate it.
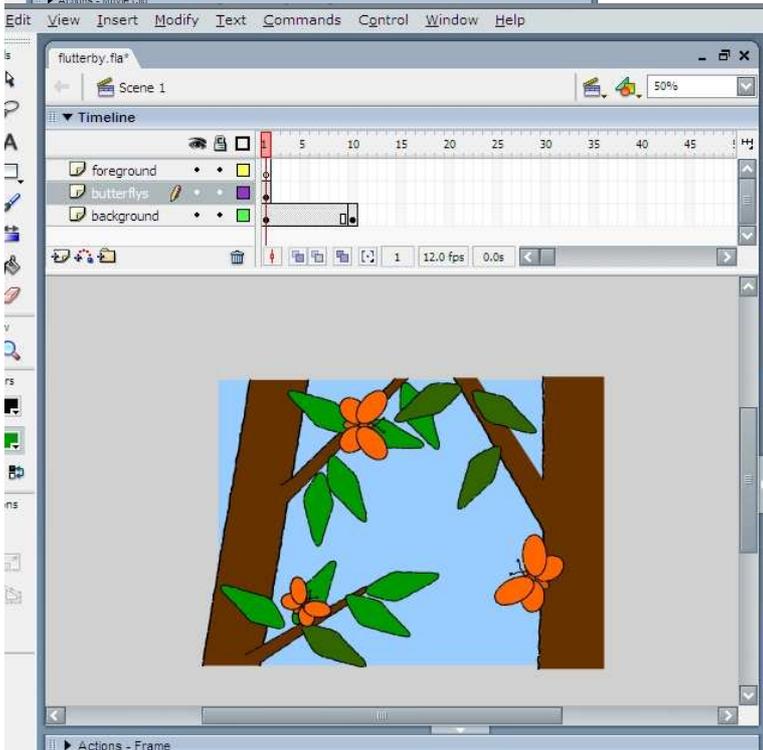
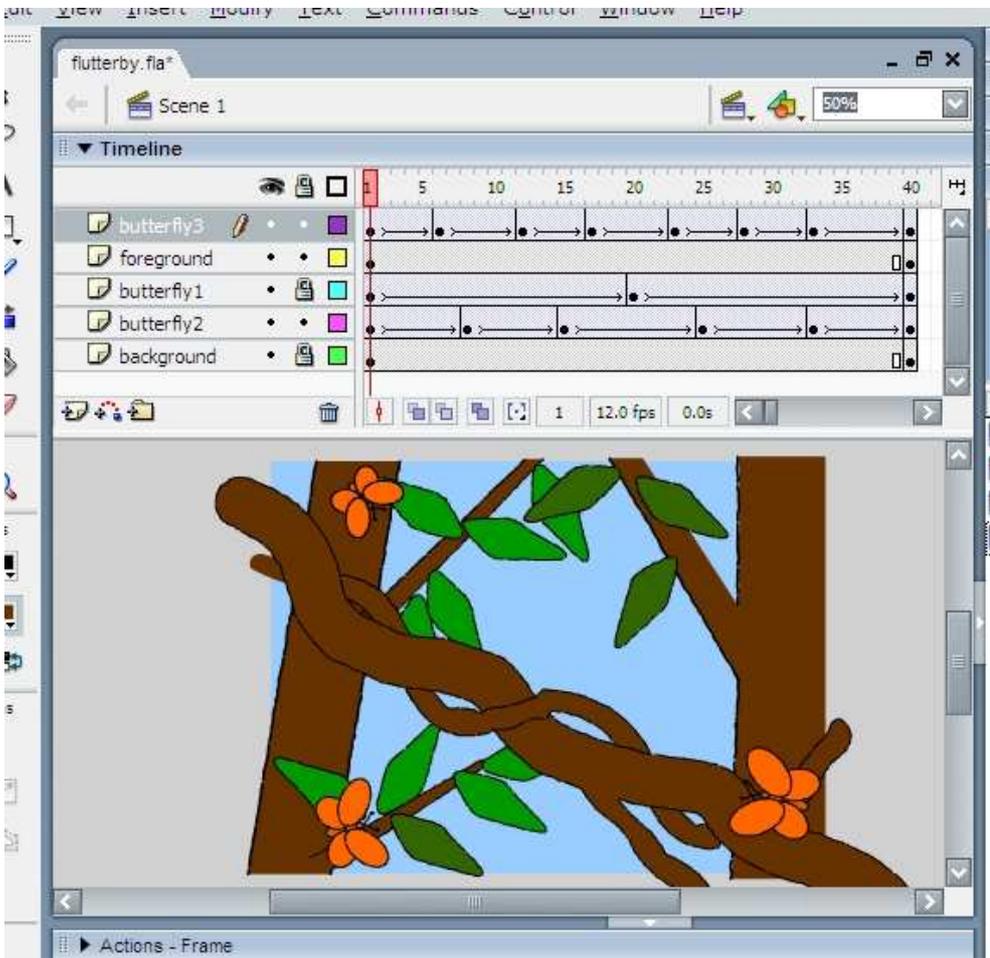Rinse and repeat for a couple more.

Interestingly, odd numbers are easier to place so they look "right"

On the foreground layer, add some more foliage so we have a sense of depth

Extend ALL layers out to FRAME 10 using a keyframe

You now have a basic scene – ALT-ENTER to see the butterflies flap on the spot.

EXTRA FOR EXPERTS:

To have the butterflies fly about, create a SEPARATE layer for each butterfly (as flash does not like to animate more than one thing per layer)

Use MOTION TWEENING and strategically placed keyframes to move them about your forest scene.

In my scene I have one butterfly above the foreground and 2 in between foreground and background, each moving in different but related ways.

Take care to rotate as you move, so their motion appears a little more natural.