

Life Cycle 4

Hercules Moth

A single female Hercules moth can produce up to 300 ova (eggs). The female glues the eggs to a leaf on the food plant. The eggs are small about the size of a match head and are orange in colour. Eggs take around 14 days to hatch. From each egg a single caterpillar will emerge.

After hatching each fresh caterpillar takes to feeding on the leaves of its food plant. After each moult the caterpillar will continue feeding and shedding its exoskeleton till it reaches full size. At this stage the caterpillar produces silk and spins a large cocoon which is attached to the food plant. The caterpillar will then retreat into the cocoon where it changes to a pupa from which a moth will emerge.

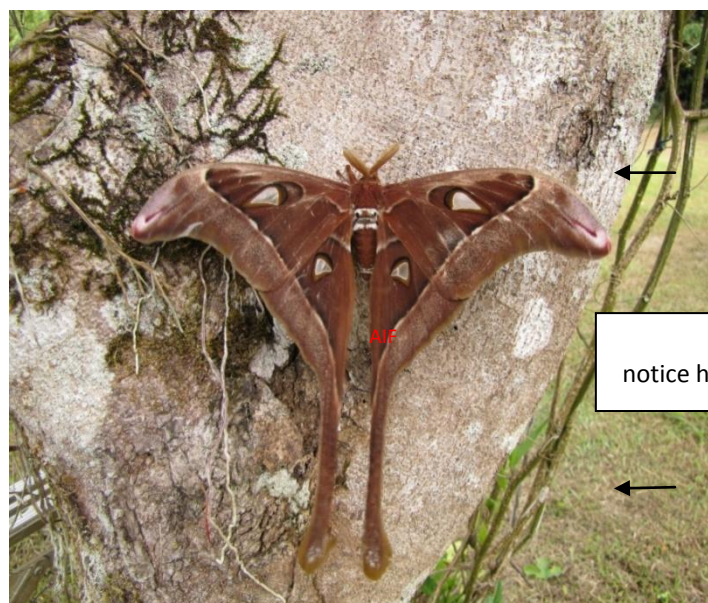
Adult males do most of the flying to find the adult females. To ensure males find the females, females emit a perfume type odour which is called pheromones. The male moths can smell these pheromones up to 2 kilometers away. The male will take flight, finding a female and mating takes place. We are unable to detect these moth pheromones.

Females are more bulky in the body and have short stumpy wing tails than that of the male which has long wing tails.

Interesting Facts.

Moths undergo a complete metamorphosis; an egg stage, a larval stage and a pupa stage.

The Hercules moth does not feed, it lacks any mouth parts. The moth stage only lasts for around 14 days. As a larva, it can live around 3 months.



Male Hercules moth, notice he has long wing tails.

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Life Cycle of the Hercules Moth

Fill in the missing scientific names of the stages of the Hercules moth life cycle.

