

## Life Cycle 3

# Spiny Leaf Stick Insect

A single female Spiny Leaf Stick insect can produce over 500 ova (eggs) which are dropped on the forest floor. The eggs look like small plant seeds, mottled brown to mottled white colours. Eggs take from 4 months to 19 months to hatch. From each egg a single nymph will emerge. Females are more bulkier in the body than that of the slender male. Why? Females are often full of eggs. A fully grown female can weigh 20 to 30 gms.

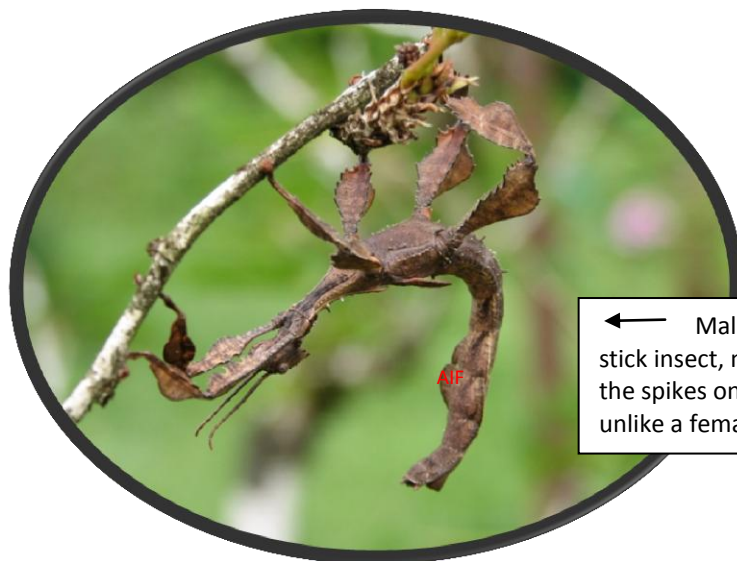
After hatching each fresh nymph take to running in an upwards tendency to the top of a suitable food plant. Here the stick insect will start to feed on the leaves. After making its first moult the insect continues to feed. Moulting will continue for a total of five times before reaching adult stage. At this stage, mating takes place day and night.

Interesting facts.

Phasmids have what is known as incomplete metamorphosis – they grow by moulting.

Spiny leaf stick insects are capable of replacing a lost leg. While in the nymph stage if the insect suffers the loss of a leg it will regrow a new leg. This leg will always be smaller than all the other legs.

Records show an adult female Spiny Leaf weighing as much as 32 grams, making it the heaviest stick insect in the world.



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← Male Spiny Leaf stick insect, notice he lacks the spikes on his abdomen, unlike a female.

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## Life Cycle of the Spiny Leaf Stick Insect

Fill in the missing scientific names of the stages of the spiny leaf stick insect life cycle.

