

Order:

Lepidoptera

part A- Moths

CLASSIFICATION
Kingdom: Animalia
Phylum: Arthropoda
Class: Insecta
Order: Lepidoptera
Family:
Subfamily:
Genus:
Species:

Both Moths and Butterflies make up the order *Lepidoptera*. For part a - we look at Moths.

World-wide there are over 160,000 species of Lepidoptera. Currently there are over 22,000 species of Lepidoptera in Australia with approximately 21,000 species being moths.

Moths can be identified for the most as they fold their wings upright or rest with their wings laid out flat. In general their antennae are feathery. Some female moths do have thread-like antennae. Their body is covered in tiny, fish like scales. Moth caterpillars make silk from which they make a cocoon.

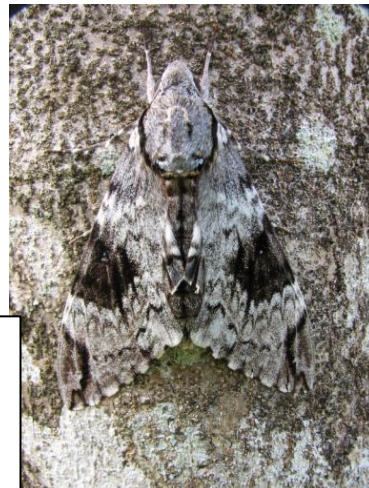
Moths can be found Australia wide. The largest moth in the world is the Australian Hercules moth – *Coscinocera hercules*. This moth can have a wing span of up to 32 cm.

Moths undergo a complete metamorphosis. When a fresh caterpillar hatches from an egg it eats the leaves on which the eggs were laid on. Before reaching the stage of full growth a moth caterpillar will shed its exoskeleton 5 or 6 times, this varies between different moth species.

Most adult moths have a mouth part which is like a tube and is referred to as a proboscis. The adult moth uses this tube to suck nectar from flowers. Some moths do not feed at all in the adult stage, one such moth is the Hercules moth which lacks any mouthparts.



← Two moth caterpillars from the Saturniidae family. These caterpillars are harmless.



→ A large species of Hawk moth using its cryptic colouration to camouflage on a tree trunk.

