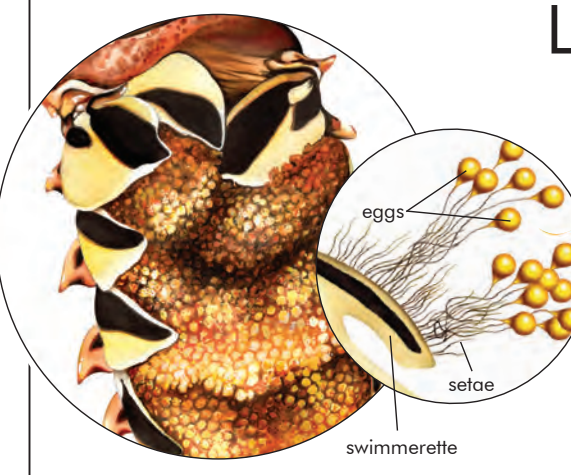
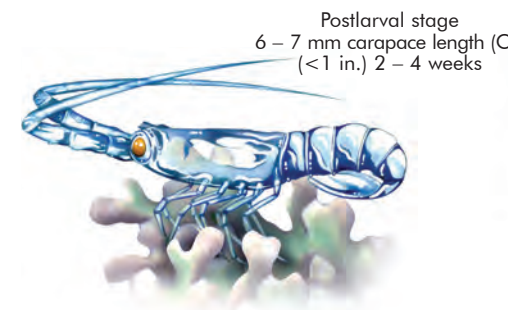


Life Cycle



1 After the eggs are fertilized, the female carries them in the tiny hairs (setae) under her tail until they hatch.



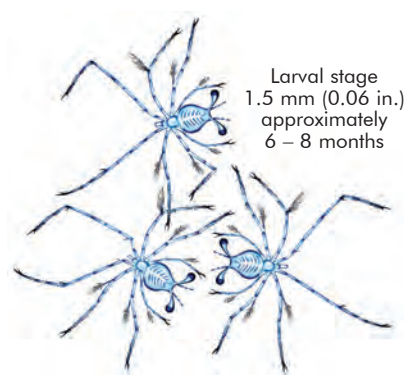
4 Phyllosome metamorphose into the puerulus post-larva and transit from the open ocean to near-shore nursery habitats (primarily a macroalgae called *Laurencia*).



Up to two million eggs may be released by a large female lobster. As few as one, on average, might survive to become an adult.

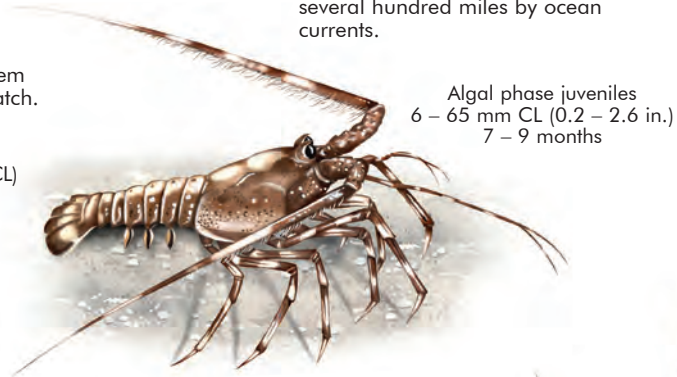


2 Each egg takes up water and expands until the egg membrane breaks and the new lobster larva is released.



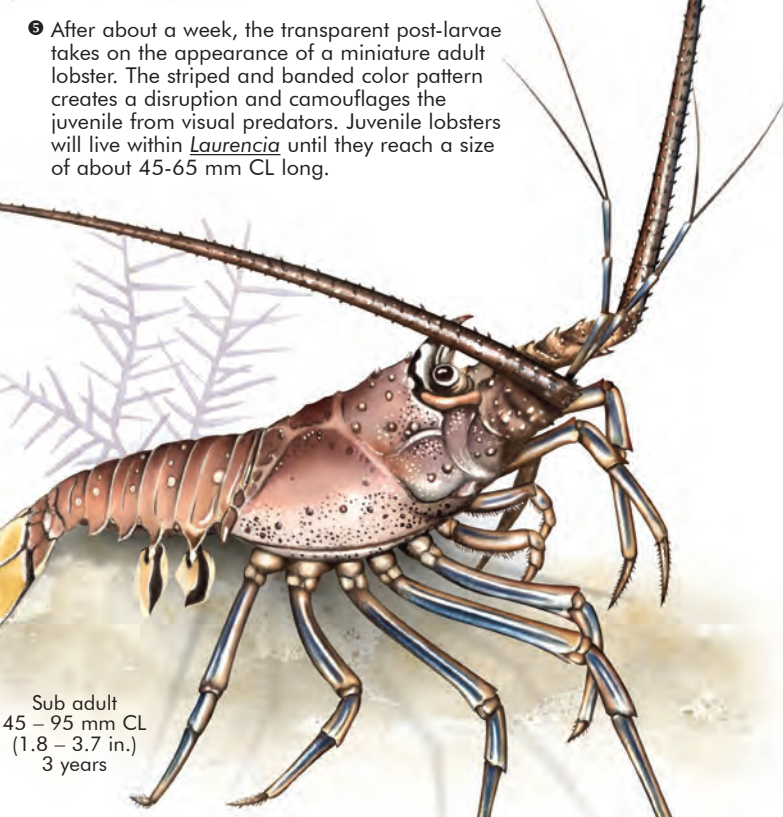
Larval stage 1.5 mm (0.06 in.) approximately 6 - 8 months

After hatching, transparent phyllosome (leaf-bodied) larvae can be carried several hundred miles by ocean currents.



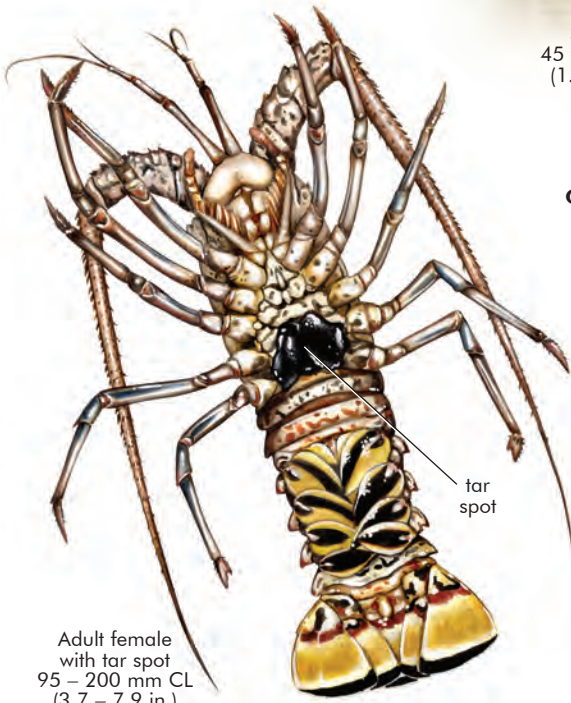
Algal phase juveniles 6 - 65 mm CL (0.2 - 2.6 in.) 7 - 9 months

3 After about a week, the transparent post-larva takes on the appearance of a miniature adult lobster. The striped and banded color pattern creates a disruption and camouflages the juvenile from visual predators. Juvenile lobsters will live within *Laurencia* until they reach a size of about 45-65 mm CL long.



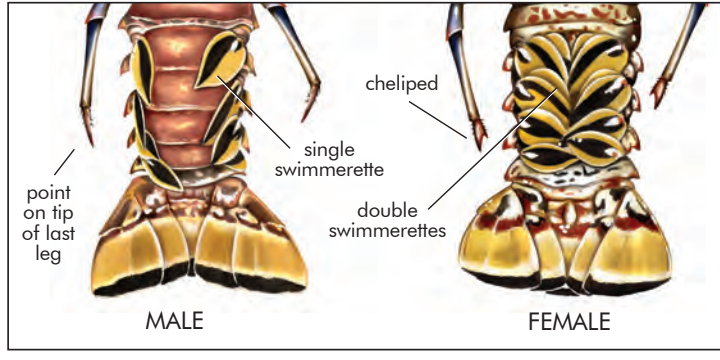
Sub adult 45 - 95 mm CL (1.8 - 3.7 in.) 3 years

6 Sub adults start to move to coral reefs and crevices, where they are often found in large groups during the day. It takes lobsters up to 3 years to reach adulthood and start reproducing.



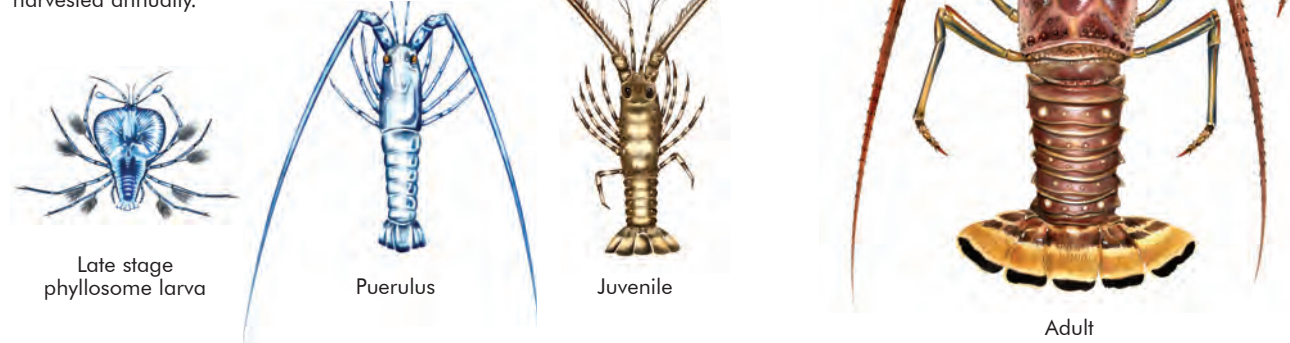
Adult female with tar spot 95 - 200 mm CL (3.7 - 7.9 in.)

The male attaches a tar-like spermatophore to the underside of the female's carapace. Most reproduction occurs during the late spring, with females producing several clutches of eggs during the reproductive season.



1. Males have a single swimmerette whereas in females several of them are forked or double swimmerettes for brooding eggs.
2. In males, the tip of the last leg comes to a sharp point. In females, the tip is a small claw (a cheliped) used to scratch the spermatophore and fertilize eggs.

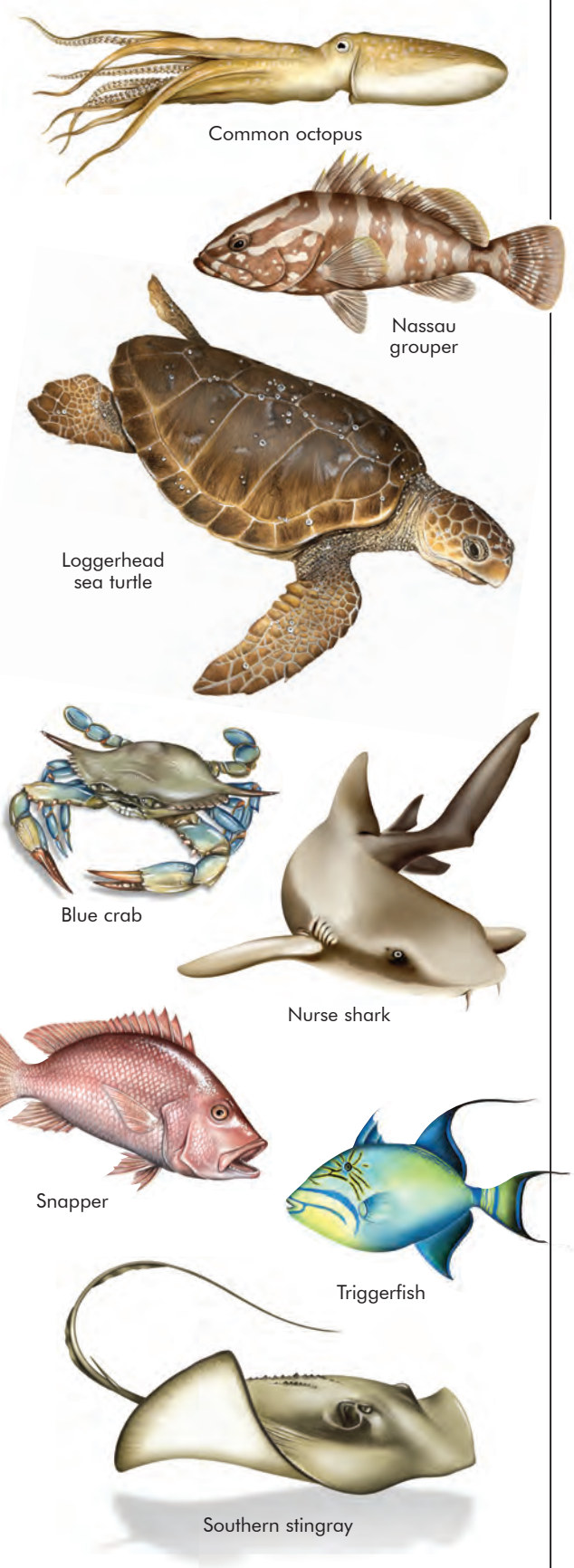
In unfished areas Caribbean spiny lobsters can grow to 200mm CL (7.9 in.) and over 5 kg (11.2 lbs.) in mass. Due to the heavy fishing of the spiny lobster, over 90% of legal sized adults may be harvested annually.



CARIBBEAN Spiny Lobster

Panulirus argus

Natural Predators



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