

# Luna Moth

*Actias luna*



Adult



Caterpillar



Cocoon

# Luna Moth

*Actis luna*

Order: Lepidoptera

Family: Saturniidae

**Etymology:** The genus *Actias* is currently unknown. The species name *luna* is Latin for moon.

**Wing span:** 3.25 – 4.50 inches (82 – 115 mm)

**Habitat:** Luna Moths are primarily found in deciduous hardwood forests and the surrounding areas.

**Host Plant:** The larvae have a large list of host plants they can feed on, but they seem to do quite well on Walnut, Hickory, and Sweet Gum.

**Adult Food Source:** Adults do not have functioning mouth parts, so as adults they will not feed.

**Life History:** At night females release a pheromone into the air. Males flying through the air sense the pheromone and follow it back to the female. The female and male, in some cases, can remain copulated until the next night. Each following night the female searches out host plants on which to lay her eggs.

**Flights:** In the northern part of their range, there is usually one brood from May-July while in the south there can be two or three broods a year from March-September.

**Fun Facts:** Males and females look very similar, but there is one easy way to tell them apart. Females have much smaller antennae compared to males. The males need the larger, more sensitive antennae so they can follow the pheromone trail back to the female.

**Range:**

