



Think like an Entomologist... a scientist who studies insects

Language of the Discipline:

Abdomen: The last of the three major body divisions of an insect.

Antenna, Antennae (pl.): A pair of sensory organs located on the head of an insect, above the mouthparts.

Arthropod: Any of the invertebrate animals (such as insects, spiders, or crustaceans) having an exoskeleton, a segmented body and jointed limbs.

Caterpillar: The immature stage (larva) of a butterfly, moth, or sawfly.

Cocoon: A silken case formed by an insect larva for pupation.

Elytra: The thickened or leathery front or forewings of insects such as beetles.

Epizootic: A disease outbreak within an insect population.

Exoskeleton: A skeleton or supportive structure on the outside of an insect body.

Gradual metamorphosis: A type of insect development in which there is no prolonged resting stage (pupa). The three stages are: egg, nymph, and adult.

Head: The anterior region of an insect, which bears the mouthparts, eyes, antennae and houses the brain.

Hindwings: The second pair of wings of an insect.

Instar: The stage of an insect's life between successive molts, for example the first instar is between hatching from the egg and the first molt.

Larva, Larvae (pl.): The immature stage between the egg and pupa of insects having complete metamorphosis where the immature differs radically from the adult (e.g., caterpillars, grubs).

Life Cycle: The sequence of events that occurs during the lifetime of an individual organism.

Maggot: The immature form (larva) of a fly or wasp, lacking legs and a well-developed head.

Metamorphosis: A change in body form during development of an insect.

Mite: Any of several minute invertebrates belonging to the phylum Arthropoda, class Arachnida.

Nectar: The sugary liquid secreted by many flowers.

Nematode: An elongated, cylindrical worm parasitic in animals, insects, or plants, or free-living in soil or water.

Nymph: The immature stage, following hatching from the egg, of an insect that does not have a pupal stage.

Ocelli: Simple eyes on some adult and larval insects. Typically there are three, which form an inverted triangle dorsally, the function of which is obscure.

Palp (palpus): Sensory organ attached to insect mouthparts that is used to test the quality of food.

Parasite: An organism that lives in or on another organism (the host) during some portion of its life cycle.

Parasitoid: An animal that feeds in or on another living animal, consuming all or most of its tissues and eventually killing it.

Pest: An organism that interferes with human activities, property, or health, or is objectionable.

Phenology: The seasonal life history of an insect population.

Pronotum: The upper, often shield-like, hardened body-wall plate, located just behind the head of an insect.

Pupa, Pupae (pl.): The nonfeeding stage between the larva and adult in insects with complete metamorphosis.

Spiracles: The external openings of the insect breathing (tracheal) system, found along the abdomen.

Thorax: The insect body region behind the head which bears the legs and wings.

Resource:

Hoffmann, M.P. and Frodsham, A.C. (1993) Natural Enemies of Vegetable Insect Pests. Cooperative Extension, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY. 63 pp.