Polyphemus

Antheraea polyphemus



Inside

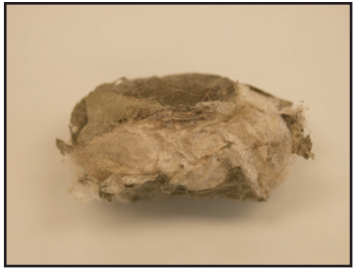
Outside



Adult



Larvae



Cocoon

REIMAN GARDENS
IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

Polyphemus

Antheraea polyphemus

Order: Lepidoptera
Family: Saturniidae

Etymology: The origin of the genus *Antheraea* is currently unknown. Polyphemus was a Cyclops from Greek mythology who was blinded by Odysseus.

Wingspan: 4- 5.5 inches (101 – 139 mm)

Habitat: Polyphemus Moths are found in areas near their host plants such as forested areas, orchards or wetlands and urban areas.

Host Plant: Larvae are known to feed from 20 different woody species. Oaks, maples, birch or hazelnut are some of their favorites.

Adult Food Source: As an adult the Polyphemus moth does not have a functioning mouth part and it will not feed.

Life History: Freshly emerged females release their pheromones in the evening to attract nearby males. After mating the females lay their eggs singly or in small groups on the host plant leaves. The larvae feed on the host plant until they are ready to form their cocoon.

Flights: In the northern part of their range there is one brood a year. Across most of the central United States Polyphemus have two broods. Then in the southern most parts of their range they can have several broods and adults can be found year round.

Fun Facts: As a step in the formation of the Polyphemus cocoon a host leaf is wrapped around the cocoon. In the fall those leaves often drop to the ground hiding the cocoon in the leaf litter.

Range:

