

Moth Cocoons

A CAROLINA™ CareSheet

Care and handling

As soon as you receive the cocoons, soak them in room-temperature, dechlorinated water for 30 to 60 seconds. Then, lightly mist every other day with room-temperature water. (Room temperature is typically defined as 20 to 22.5° C, or 68 to 72° F). Place the cocoons in a flight cage until the adult moths emerge. At ambient temperatures, most moths will emerge in 2 to 3 weeks.

When the moth is ready, it will rip the silk using hornlike projections and will secrete a substance that breaks down the binding of the silk. Usually, the moth will make a lot of noise during the process. Adults usually emerge from their cocoons in mid-morning.

Habitat Setup

Adult moths expand and stretch their wings as soon as they emerge. (Be sure to provide adequate room, or their wings will be deformed.) Provide a piece of screen, cheesecloth, or some other object for the newly emerged moth to climb onto. It will stay on this surface until its wings have dried and hardened. Once the moth's wings are dry, this nocturnal insect will rest until nighttime.

FAQ's

What moths will emerge from our cocoons?

We ship a variety of giant silk moths. Once your moth has emerged, you can check its identity in a field guide. If you don't have a field guide, go to www.butterfliesandmoths.org, select Taxonomic Groups and Giant Silkworm Moths (under the category Wild Silk Moths) to view photos for identification.

It has been 3 weeks and our moths have not emerged. What can we do?

If the cocoons you receive do not produce moths within 2 to 3 weeks, they are probably in diapause (hibernation). Refrigerate the cocoons for at least 2 weeks at 7° C (45° F) and allow another 2 weeks at room temperature for emergence. If the adults still have not emerged, refrigerate again for 1 to 2 months before bringing them out at room temperature. Each day after you bring them out, lightly mist the cocoons with room-temperature water to prevent them from drying out.

What do we feed our moths?

Adult moths have a short lifespan: they typically die within a week of finding a mate and reproducing. Moths do not feed during the adult stage, so it is not necessary to feed them. They survive on fat stored from the larval stage.

Do we have male or female moths?

In the case of the Prometheus, males have dark wings with tan borders while females have brown or reddish-brown wings with tan borders. In the other moths, the sexes are similar. The abdomen of the female is usually larger and rounder because of the egg mass.

Problems? We hope not, but if so contact us. We want you to have a good experience.

Orders and replacements: 1-800-334-5551 then select Customer Service

Technical Support and Questions: caresheets@carolina.com



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