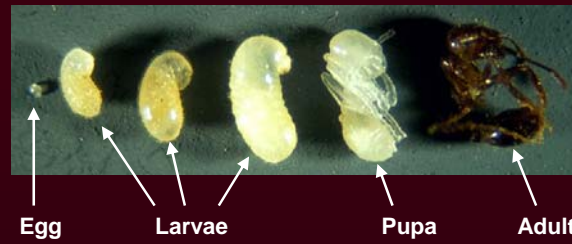




8

Mature colonies consist of a range of workers made up basically of two castes, a few majors and a large number of minors. Reproductives are produced during mating season. During the summer minors live 60-90 days, majors 90-150 days. Queens can live up to seven years.



1

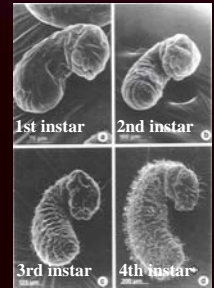
The fire ant has 4 life stages

Fire Ant Biology: Life in the Mound



2

The circle above highlights eggs found in the brood chamber of a mound. Eggs usually take 7-10 days to hatch.

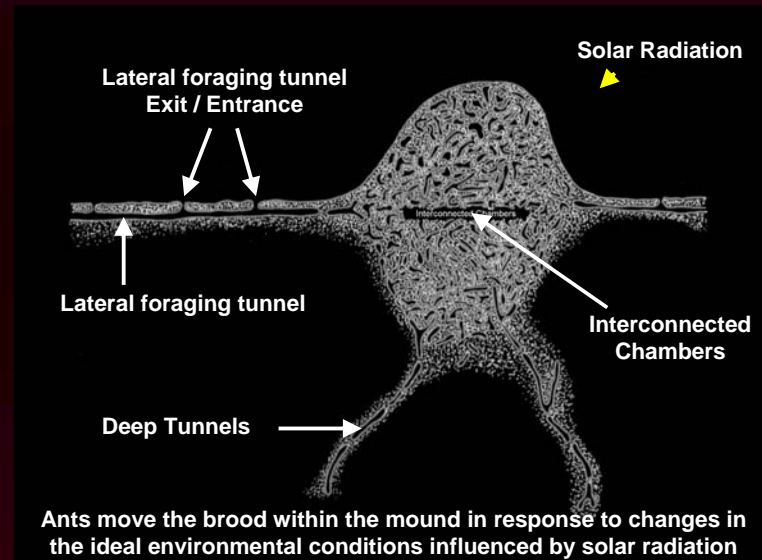
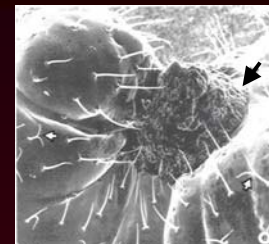


3

Larvae molt four times over a 12-15 day period. The first three instars are fed regurgitated liquid food.

4

The fourth instar is the only stage of fire ant able to feed on and digest solid food. The food is placed in a food basket just beneath the mouth (black arrow).



Ants move the brood within the mound in response to changes in the ideal environmental conditions influenced by solar radiation



7

Pupae usually turn darker as they mature. Newly emerged adults are light in color and referred to as callows.



6

Pupae that will develop into different size workers. Pupae take 9-16 days to develop.



5

Larval instars that will develop into different size workers.