

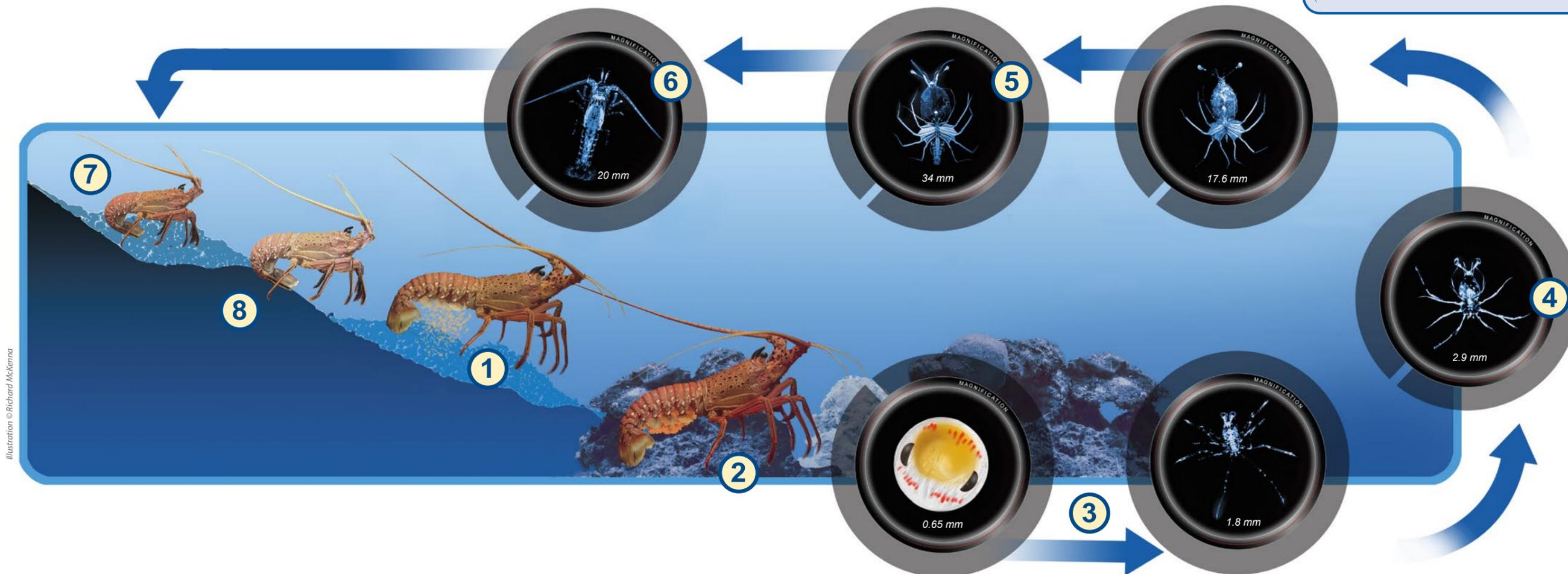
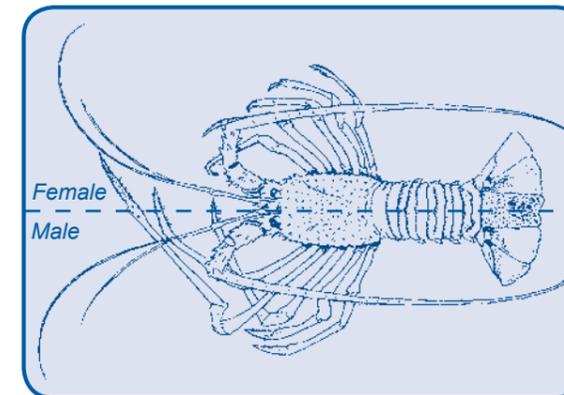
LIFE CYCLE WESTERN ROCK LOBSTER

Panulirus cygnus

7. Within days of settling the pueruli develop their red colouration. Growing through a series of moults, they feed and grow for the next 3 to 4 years in shallow inshore reefs.

6. At the final phyllosoma stage, the larvae metamorphose into miniature transparent lobsters known as 'pueruli'. At this time they swim up to 60 km across the continental shelf with help from prevailing currents to 'settle' on inshore reefs.

5. The larvae grow to 35 mm in a series of moults called stages. The majority die, but the survivors are eventually carried by winds and ocean currents back towards the continental shelf.



8. In November lobsters undergo a synchronised moult changing their shell colour to a creamy-white/pale pink. These lobsters are known as 'whites'. During this phase, these lobsters migrate in large groups at night until they reach spawning grounds in waters up to 100 m deep. The lobsters return to their normal red colour at the next moult a few months later.

1. Western rock lobsters mature at 6 to 7 years of age and mate in August – September. The male attaches a packet of sperm, known as a 'tarspot', to the underside of the female.



Tar spot.



Female endopodites.



Fully setose female.



Berried female.

2. Between September and February the female lobsters generally release their eggs. They also release the sperm by scratching the tarspot. The eggs are fertilised as they are swept backwards and become attached to the sticky setae (fine hairs) on the endopodites beneath the tail. Females carrying eggs are known as 'berried'.

3. Eggs hatch dependent on water temperature in 4 to 8 weeks, releasing 2 mm long planktonic larvae, called 'phyllosoma'.

4. The phyllosoma drift offshore and spend 9 to 11 months in the open ocean, generally between 400 and 1,000 km off the Western Australian coast.

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