

FUN FACTS: Luna moths are particularly adept sniffers. “The females have really big abdomens that secrete a pheromone that can attract males from up to a mile away.” The males pick up scents with intricate, comb-like antennae filled with “tens of thousands of sensory pores.”

4 *Scorpions & Tarantulas*

WHAT THEY LOOK LIKE: Tarantulas have big, hairy legs and abdomens. Scorpions, closely related to spiders, have eight legs, not including the pincers, and a large, venomous stinger. Texas scorpions range from dark brown to a nearly translucent yellow.

WHAT THEY EAT (AND STING!): While both creatures feed on insects, tarantulas sometimes hunt frogs, toads and mice. “In our area, both are relatively harmless, in that they won’t kill you,” Abbott reassures. Tarantulas have stinging hairs that they flick off their abdomen when disturbed, and can get in your eyes and mucous membranes, causing irritation.

(NOT SO) FUN FACTS: Tarantulas periodically shed their external skeletons in a process called molting, simultaneously replacing internal organs and re-growing lost appendages. Though both are venomous, out of the nearly 2,000 scorpion species, only 30 or 40 have strong enough poison to kill a person, and none of them are found in Texas. No tarantula is poisonous enough to kill a human; their mild venom is weaker than the average bee’s.

5 *Termite*

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE: Immature subterranean termites look like white ants; adults look like black ants with wings.

WHAT IT EATS: Your house! Termites live off of the cellulose found in wood.



fig. 4



fig. 5

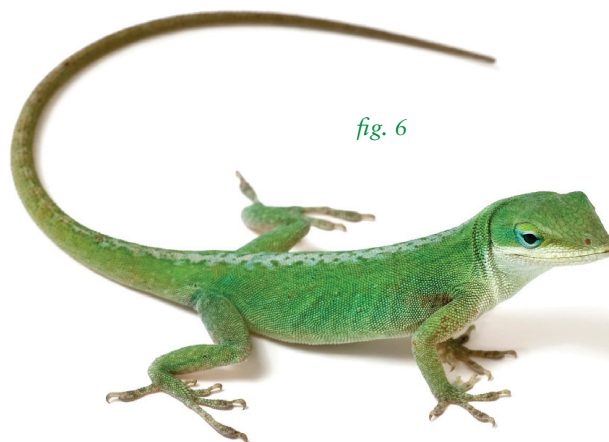


fig. 6

Insects displayed at actual size

(NOT SO) FUN FACTS: The ones that do all the damage never mature. They live only to eat wood, because termites operate under a social structure in which each bug has a specific role. There are workers, soldiers and reproductives. Keep them at bay by making sure no wood touches both the ground and

the structure of your house, and schedule regular inspections by pest control.

6 *Green Anole*

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE: “It’s the only green lizard we have in this area,” says Abbott. Adults can change from brown to green and back again.

WHAT IT EATS: Small insects, including aphids and other garden pests. Score!

FUN FACTS: Males have a dulap, which is just a “big, red flap in their neck region. They’ll flash that at a female to get her attention, and males will flash them at one another to compete to see who’s got the biggest dulap.”