After about a week, the transparent post-larvae takes on the appearance of a miniature adult lobster. The striped and banded color pattern creates a disruption and camouflages the juvenile from visual predators. Juvenile lobsters will live within Laurencia until they reach a size of about 45-65 mm CL long.

After hatching, transparent phyllosome (leaf-bodied) larvae can be carried several hundred miles by ocean currents. Sub adults start to move to coral reefs and crevices, where they are often found in large groups during the day. It takes lobsters up to 3 years to reach adulthood and start reproducing.

In unfished areas Caribbean spiny lobsters can grow to 200 mm CL (7.9 in.) and over 3 kg (6.6 lbs.) in mass. Due to the heavy fishing of the spiny lobster, over 90% of legal sized adults may be harvested annually.

1. Males have a single swimmerette whereas in females several of them are forked or double swimmerettes for brooding eggs.

2. In males, the tip of the last leg comes to a sharp point. In females, the tip is a small claw (a cheliped) used to scratch the spermatophore and fertilize eggs.

Up to two million eggs may be released by a large female lobster. As few as one, on average, might survive to become an adult.

Each egg takes up water and expands until the egg membrane breaks and the new lobster larva is released.

Phyllosome metamorphose into the puerulus post-larve and transit from the open ocean to near-shore nursery habitats (primarily a macroalgae called Laurencia).