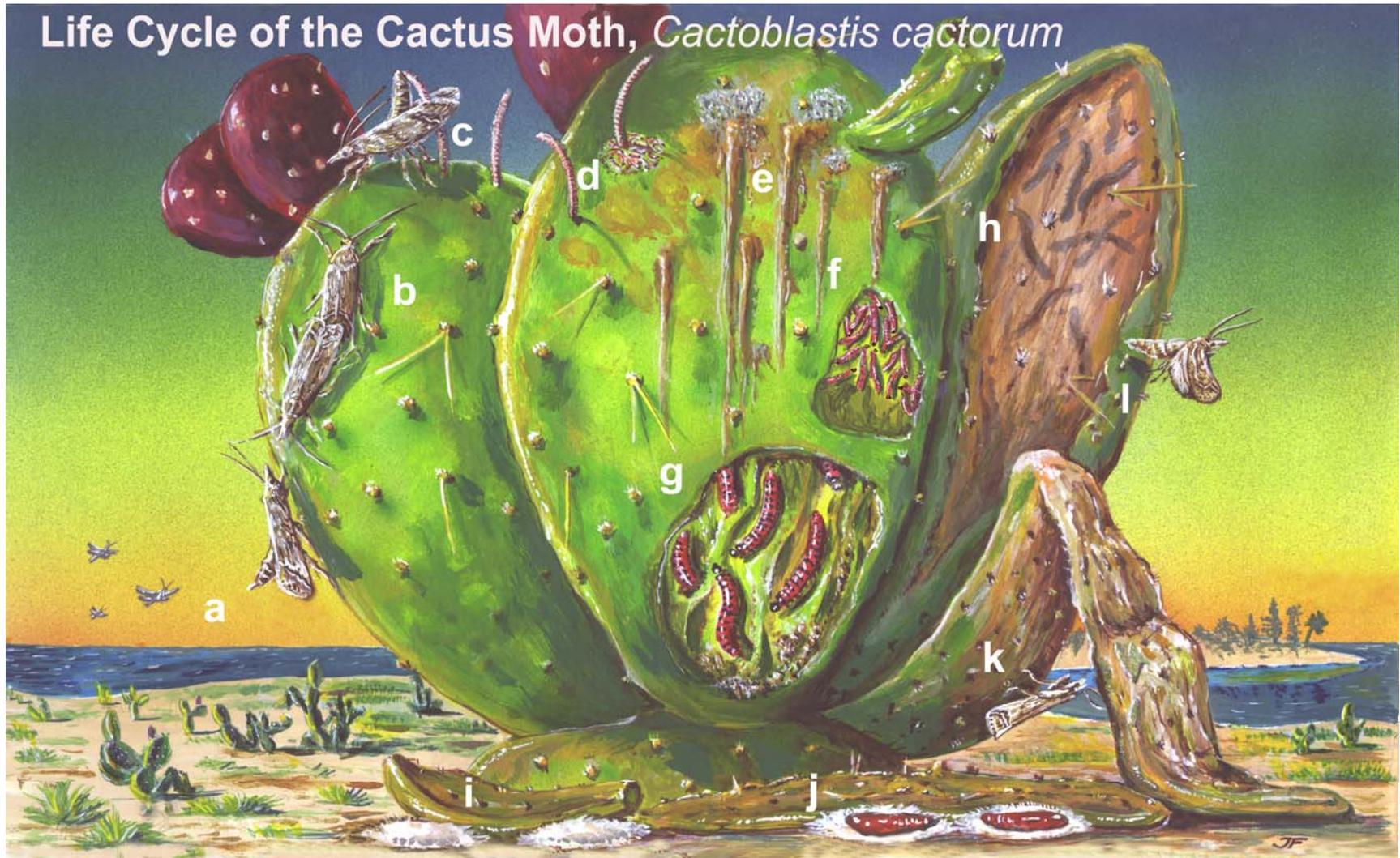


Life Cycle of the Cactus Moth, *Cactoblastis cactorum*



(a) Before sunrise, the female moth begins to release sex pheromone signaling to males her readiness to mate. Males respond and (b) mating takes place for a short time. (c) After an incubation period, the female deposits an egg stick averaging 70-90 eggs. Egg sticks, which resemble cactus spines, develop and (d) hatch in 25- 30 days. Gregarious first instar larvae bore into the cactus pad. The external damage (e) is characterized by yellowing of plant tissue, with oozing of plant fluids and insect frass. (f) Shown here in cross-section, larvae feed, (g) develop internally, and eventually (h) hollow out the cactus pad. Mature larvae exit the cactus pad to (i) form cocoons and pupate (j) under debris on the ground at the base of the plant. After emergence (k), adult moths disperse (k) to new areas.