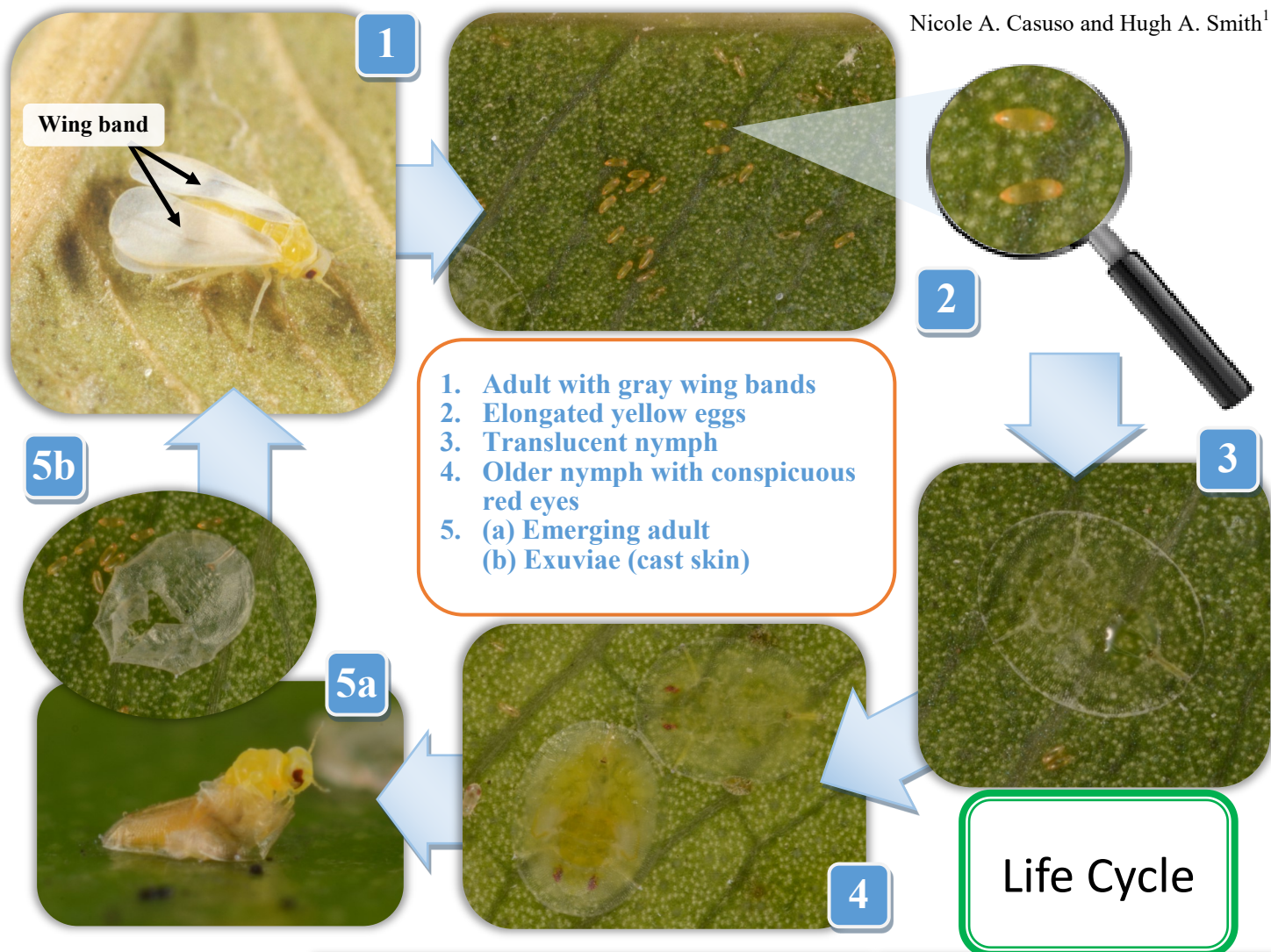


# Ficus Whitefly - *Singhiella simplex*



## Damage



Leaf yellowing



Extensive defoliation and dieback



Damage to *Ficus benjamina*

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# Ficus Whitefly, *Singhiella simplex*

## General Morphology:

*What does it look like?*

Adults are approximately 1.4-1.6 mm long and can be distinguished from other whiteflies by a faint gray to light brown band towards the middle of the white wings. This species does not produce obvious wax. Adult females lay long, yellowish eggs along the midrib on the underside of leaves. Young nymphs are fairly translucent and may be difficult to see without a hand lens. The final nymphal stage appears as a tan to light green oval and has conspicuous red eyes.

## General Biology:

*What is its life cycle?*

1. Adult females oviposit eggs on the host plant.
2. Eggs hatch into first instar crawlers that find a feeding site and settle.
3. Immature whiteflies pass through four nymphal stages or instars, which are immobile.
4. Winged adults emerge from the fourth nymphal instar.
5. The entire life cycle takes about 30 days.

## Plant Hosts and Geographical Range

Also known as “Fig whitefly,” this species is found on *Ficus* species, especially weeping fig, (*F. benjamina*). Thought to be native to Asia, ficus whitefly has been introduced to temperate and tropical areas of the Caribbean and the Americas. In 2007 it was detected in Florida, where it is considered a major pest.

## Natural Enemies: *Predators & Parasitoids*

Parasitic wasps *Encarsia protransvena* and *Amitus bennetti* have been associated with ficus whitefly in the south Florida landscape. Several coccinellid beetle species and lacewings are considered important predators.

## Signs & Symptoms: *What type of damage does it cause?*

Unlike many other whitefly species, immatures may be found on both the upper and lower surfaces of leaves. Direct feeding can cause extensive leaf yellowing, rapid leaf drop, and variable branch dieback.

Not all *Ficus* species are equally susceptible to infestation by this whitefly. On susceptible plants, however, dense infestations can stunt overall growth.

For additional information on managing whiteflies, see *Managing Whiteflies on Landscape Ornamentals*. 2017. E. A. Buss, C. Mannion, L. Osborne, and A. Dale. Publication ENY-317. <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/mg254>. For assistance identifying and managing whiteflies, contact your local Extension office.