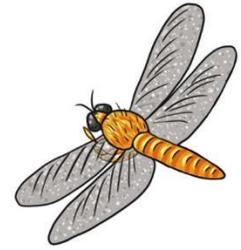




Mini-Beast Safari

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Take some time to discover what small animals live around where you live – your yard, a vacant lot in your neighborhood, the beach - could be just about anywhere. We have all kinds of small animals that live where we live - insects, worms, slugs, etc. - for this exercise we are going to call them all “bugs.” To find these small beasties, you just have to be willing to look closely and spend a little time looking.

You might want to have:

- A small plastic container to temporarily house your critters so you can look at them more closely. Be sure to poke holes in the top so air can get in. Only one animal in each container at a time.
- Something to write or draw with
- Something to draw or write on – you can use the “Adopt a Bug” sheet below, a journal (learn how to make your own journal here: [Bookmaking with Children: Nature Journal with Twig Binding.](#)), or your own paper
- Garden gloves to protect your hands for digging or while turning over logs
- A small shovel

Where to look:

- Rocks – turn over loose bricks or stones in your patio. After you have peeked under, be sure to put the rocks back like you found them.
- Logs – carefully look through the wood in your wood pile. You may want gloves for this habitat for protect your hands. Be respectful and always put logs back just like how you found them.
- Soil – dig in different parts of your yard. A flower bed, under some leaves – there are often cool worms and grubs in the dirt.
- Flower beds – are there pollinators around the flowers? Watch bees and wasps as they are feeding, be safe and do not try to catch them.

Safety rules:

- Return the habitat where you searched back to how you found it – it is a home for many animals.
- Don't stick your hands or fingers in places you can't see. Most animals will defend themselves if they cannot escape.
- Roll logs towards you, so that the log will be between you and any animals that are hiding underneath.

I found an animal! Now what...?

- You can observe the animal – either by catching them for a few minutes in your plastic container or by looking at them in their wild environment.
- Try drawing part or all of the animal. Maybe it has really cool eyes or stripy legs, it's OK to just draw that part.
- For a guided observation, fill out one of our observation sheets. Observation sheet can be found here: [Adopt a Bug Data sheet.pdf](#)
- If you want to identify your animal, try looking in this field guide to common Calvert County critters – or use a field guide of your own:
 - “Common Calvert County Bugs” field guide: [Common Calvert County Bugs.pdf](#)
 - Other identification resources to try:
 - iNaturalist seek: [Seek by iNaturalist](#)
 - Bug Guide [Welcome to BugGuide.Net! - BugGuide.Net](#)
 - What's that bug <https://www.whatsthatbug.com/>

Want to try something else or maybe you can't go outside today? Here are some other ideas for bug-themed things to do:

Bug Olympics:

[Insect Olympics.pdf](#)

Try a bug experiment:

[ANT PICNIC \(1\).pdf](#)

Learn more about different kinds of bug mouth parts

[insect mouthparts.pdf](#)

Bug stories:

Ant story time

<https://youtu.be/3-ygGpKHH5k>

Bug crafts:

Make your own ant

<https://baltimorewoods.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Ant-buddy-craft.pdf>

Bug Snack ideas

[The Cutest Bug Theme Healthy Snacks for Kids - Fantastic Fun & Learning](#)

Bug songs:

- If you know "Head, Shoulder, Knees and Toes" try this version to help you learn the 3 main body parts that insects have: "Head, thorax, abdomen" <https://youtu.be/ImKzqBhgWdc>
- Honey bee song By: Gayle Howard (to the tune "Mary had a Little Lamb")
The honeybee goes, buzz, buzz, buzz
Buzz, Buzz, Buzz
Buzz, Buzz, Buzz
The honeybee goes buzz, buzz, buzz
On a summer day...
It's taking pollen to the hive, to the hive, to the hive,
It's taking pollen to the hive,
Not's so far away...
The bee makes honey that is sweet, that is sweet, that is sweet,
The bee makes honey that is sweet,
As sweet as sweet can be...
The bee keeps honey in the hive, in the hive, in the hive
The bee keeps honey in the hive,
And shares a bit with me!

Bug Adaptation Dress up:

All insects have characteristics in common (like having 3 body parts and 6 legs). But if you start to look a little more closely at different insects, there is a lot of variety, too. Factors like where an insect lives or what it eats, impact how it looks and how it acts. Here you can dress up as insects. Each prop represents a body part or characteristic of that animal – for example, a hard hat is not something that an ant would actually wear, but an ant's exoskeleton is hard and smooth and protects the ant from hazards in its environment just like a hard hat protects a human at a construction site.

- [Bug Dress Up.pdf](#) simple at home bug adaptation dress-up
- [TRB 5:5 - Act. 5: Specialized Structures & Environments](#) - more in-depth, general animal adaptation dress up, lesson designed for a classroom

Plant a Pollinator Garden

<https://youtu.be/aHfr8UxQoj8>

Simulate environmental changes impact on Bugs - better for older children

<https://www.uen.org/lessonplan/view/31657>

Learn more about why bugs are important:

- <https://youtu.be/LiczM-w3V-U> - specifically about pollinators
- <https://youtu.be/kpEdLtgymAw> - a quick video explaining why different bugs are important for different reasons