

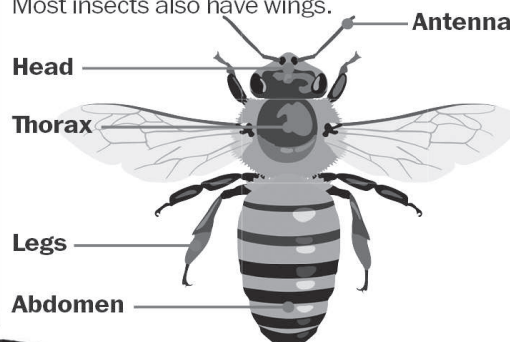
The amazing world of insects

Insects are extraordinary animals that live all around us. Read on to discover some of the reasons these strange and wonderful creatures are among the most successful on Earth.



Anatomy of an insect

All insects have a three-part body, six jointed legs, an external skeleton, and antennae. Most insects also have wings.



Above: Like spiders and scorpions, millipedes are among the animals commonly mistaken for insects.

without a backbone), and each one has a hard, protective exoskeleton and six jointed legs.

Beetles make up the largest insect group of all, with around 360,000 known species — with possibly over a million still to be discovered. One beetle expert found 1,200 different species living in a single tree! Read on to learn more astonishing insect facts...

- Tiny flies known as midges can beat their wings 50,000 times per minute.

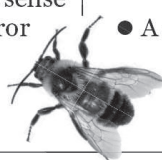
- Moths' antennae give them a brilliant sense of smell. A male emperor moth can smell a female moth from 7 miles away.



- Ladybugs sometimes pretend to be dead in order to fool potential predators.



- Many insects have compound eyes, which are made up of thousands of tiny lenses. Each lens can focus light and detect color, and together they give an insect a picture of its surroundings. Dragonflies need to have superb eyesight to be able to hunt and catch their prey in mid-air. This is why each of a dragonfly's eyes is made up of approximately 28,000 tiny lenses.



- A single honeybee colony can produce 220 pounds of honey in a single

- A queen termite can lay as many as 40,000 eggs in a day — which is roughly one egg every two seconds!

- The first animals to reach outer space were fruit flies. On February 20, 1947, the United States put fruit flies aboard a captured German V-2 rocket to study radiation exposure at high altitudes. In 3 minutes and 10 seconds of flight, the fruit flies reached an altitude of 68 miles.

- Lesser water boatmen breathe underwater by carrying around a bubble of air collected at the surface.

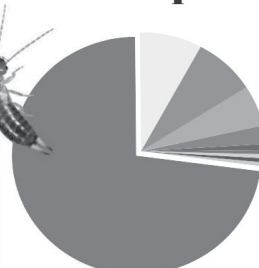
- The weight of all the insects in the world is around 70 times heavier than the weight of all the humans.



- Every fall, monarch butterflies migrate thousands of miles from Canada to Mexico. They spend the winter in Mexico and then lay eggs. Scientists think that monarch butterflies are born with a knowledge of which direction to travel, and that they then use the position of the Sun in the sky to calculate their route.

- Scientists have discovered 1.5 million species of insects so far. They estimate that there may be as many as 9 million more species still waiting to be discovered.

Three quarters of ALL animal species are insects



Scientists estimate that there are 1.4 billion insects on Earth for every human.



Above: A bombardier beetle can spray attackers with a hot, foul-smelling liquid squirted from its bottom.

- Two of the fastest-flying insects are hawk moths, which can fly at speeds of up to 34 mph, and dragonflies, which can fly even faster at 35 mph!

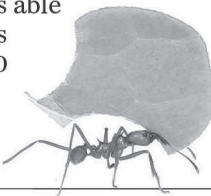
- A dung beetle can pull more than 1,100 times its own weight, which is equivalent to a human pulling six school buses.

- A bombardier beetle (pictured above) can spray attackers with a hot, foul-smelling liquid squirted from its bottom!

- The Saharan silver ant can run at speeds of 33 inches per second, which is equivalent to a human sprinting 650 feet in a second.

- A grasshopper can leap 20 times its own body length, which is equivalent to a human jumping the length of a basketball court.

- A bee is able to beat its wings 190 times in a single second.



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