



DALLAS ARBORETUM
Education

Garden STEM at Home
Insect Inspection



WE GROW MINDS, TOO.

INSECT INSPECTION



OBJECTIVE:

STUDENTS WILL RECOGNIZE THAT INSECTS ARE DIFFERENT FROM OTHER ANIMALS AND IDENTIFIABLE BY THE SAME BASIC BODY PARTS.

SOURCE

Project WILD K-12 Curriculum & Activity Guide

BACKGROUND

Insects include roughly one million species, living in every habitat found on the planet. All insects share the same basic features: a segmented body with three parts (head, thorax and abdomen), three pairs of jointed legs, antennae and compound eyes.

Some of the most well-known insects include grasshoppers, butterflies, ladybugs, dragonflies, beetles, ants and bees - but there are a vast number of other species, too! Members of the Arthropod family, but not insects, are animals like millipedes, pill bugs, crabs and spiders.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Ask students to list as many animal types as they can. Then, begin to classify them in groups, including mammals, birds, etc.
2. Discuss the insects students listed and explore the key features that each insect shares. The resources listed below provide great examples.
3. Decide how and where insects can be safely collected in your schoolyard, neighborhood or park. See the Texas A&M link below for resources.
4. Distribute the Insect Inspection Data Sheet, from the first link below, to each student.
5. Have each student complete the data sheet to determine if they have found an insect or other creature.
6. Optional extensions: (1) Brainstorm additional questions that can be answered about each specimen; (2) Research the specimen's habitat; (3) Construct a life cycle based on your research.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Project WILD Insect Inspection STEM Connections:

<https://www.fishwildlife.org/projectwild/step-stem-and-wild-work/insect-inspection>

Common Texas Insects:

<http://texashighplainsinsects.net/texas-insects-identified>

Insect Identification.org Insect Anatomy:

<https://www.insectidentification.org/insect-anatomy.asp>

Texas A&M Collecting Tools Information:

<https://bughunter.tamu.edu/collection/collectionequipment/>