

# INSECT ZOO



Insect zoos require minimal resources and offers the novel opportunity of observing insects in proximity and inspires everyone to take a closer look at the insect world.



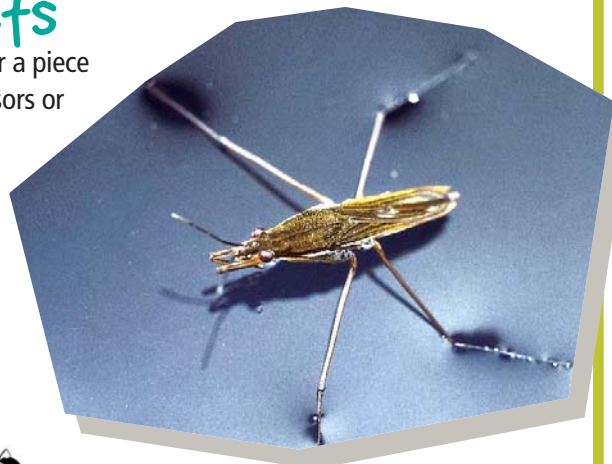
## Mini Butterfly Garden

Butterflies are attracted to many different types of flowering plants. You can attract butterflies (and other insects such as bees, flies and beetles) by planting a special flower garden. A butterfly garden need not be big - it could be planted in a terracotta pot, an old wash tub or any other suitable container. You can also create one in your backyard

or terrace at home. Place the garden or garden container in a sunny spot. More butterflies will be attracted if you put out a butterfly table – a platform on which you put pieces of sliced fruit.

## Waterscope For Aquatic Insects

You will need a large carton or a fruit drink can, a plastic bag or a piece of plastic big enough to cover the end of the carton or can, scissors or a can opener and two elastic bands. Remove both the top and bottom of the carton or juice can. Put the plastic over one end of the container and smooth it over the sides. Put the two elastic bands over the plastic, one near the top and one near the end of the plastic, to hold it in place. To use the waterscope, place the end of the container with the plastic in the water. The plastic will act as a lens to help you see beneath the water's surface.



## Ant Farming



Ant communities are fascinating to watch and you can study them at home with the aid of an ant farm. Ant farms are easy to make and maintain. You will need a large glass jar, a piece of cardboard (bigger than the mouth of the jar), a pan, soil, and ants. Fill the jar with a damp sand/soil mixture and place the jar in the pan. Fill the pan with 1/2 to 1 inch of water. The water-filled pan acts as a moat to keep the ants from wandering away from the farm. To populate the farm, gather several dozen ants from a local ant nest. Try to include a queen or some other reproductive ants (those with wings) if you can, or the farm won't last too long. Cut a small hole in the centre of the piece of cardboard and set it on top of the jar. Feed the ants honey, pieces of fruit, egg, or peanut butter. Don't overfeed, and periodically remove any excess food.



## Know your entomological terms

- Antenna** A sensory feeler on the head of an arthropod.
- Arthropod** A jointed-leg animal that has an exoskeleton that covers a body divided into segments.
- Entomologist** A scientist who studies insects.
- Exoskeleton** An external skeleton that supports and protects an animal body.
- Insect** An arthropod that has three major body regions, six legs, and may or may not have wings as an adult.
- Invertebrate** An animal without a backbone.
- Larva** An immature, but independent animal that looks completely different from an adult.
- Metamorphosis** A change in body shape shown by many animals particularly invertebrates as they grow from larva to adult.
- Pupa** In insects, a stage during which the larval body is broken down and rebuilt as an adult.
- Taxonomy** Taxonomy is the science of classifying organisms into groups by structure, origin, and common ancestor.

## Insects as Food!

**ALGERIA** — The natives of Algeria would collect large numbers of desert locusts to use as food stuff. They were a valuable resource for the poor population. The locusts were cooked in salt water and dried in the sun.

**AUSTRALIA** — Australian natives, or Aborigines would come together at the Bogong mountains to feast on Bogong moths. They were harvested, cooked in sand, and stirred in hot ashes. This would burn off the wings and legs. Some of the moths were ground into paste and made into cakes.

**JAPAN** — If you were to go to a restaurant in Tokyo, you might have the opportunity to sample some of these insect-based dishes:



*hachi-no-ko* - boiled wasp larvae (left)  
*zaza-mushi* - aquatic insect larvae  
*inago* - fried rice-

field grasshoppers *semi* - fried cicada *sangi* - fried silk moth pupae from India where it's known as "Chindi chutney."

**INDIA** — Ants are collected in leaf cups and put directly into the hot ashes of the fire for a few minutes. The ants then are removed and ground into paste. Salt and ground chilis are added and the mixture is baked.