



Arthropods, World Champs of Survival

Arthropods -- such as arachnids, millipedes, crustaceans, and insects -- are the largest and most successful group of animals on Earth. Humans are vertebrates, which means we have a spine. However, **arthropods are invertebrates**, so they do not have a spine or other bones inside their bodies the way other mammals do. Instead, they have an exoskeleton -- a skeleton on the outside of the body. **Strong exoskeletons** allowed arthropods to be the first animals to live on Earth millions of years ago! Arthropods also have **segmented bodies**, which means their bodies are organized into a few units.



What is an insect?

Insects are one type of arthropod. Like all arthropods, their bodies are divided into segments. Insects have three segments: head, thorax, and abdomen. On their head, insects have **two antennae and two eyes**. Their thorax helps them move, since their **six legs** and (if they have them) wings are attached there. The abdomen is the last part and, in some insects, contains spiracles, which help the insect breathe. Some insects we commonly see in Wisconsin are **mosquitos, flies, butterflies, gnats, crickets, and ants**.

Make Insect Observations in Your Own Neighborhood!

Grab some supplies such as a clipboard, pencil, MPM's Insect Observation Sheet, and a magnifying glass if you have one. With the help of your adult, *temporarily* trap an insect in a clear jar or dish, making sure it still has air. Record your observations and a drawing of your insect. **Then let your insect go!**

INSECT OBSERVATION SHEET

What type of insect is it (if I know)?

Where did I find it?

What color is it?

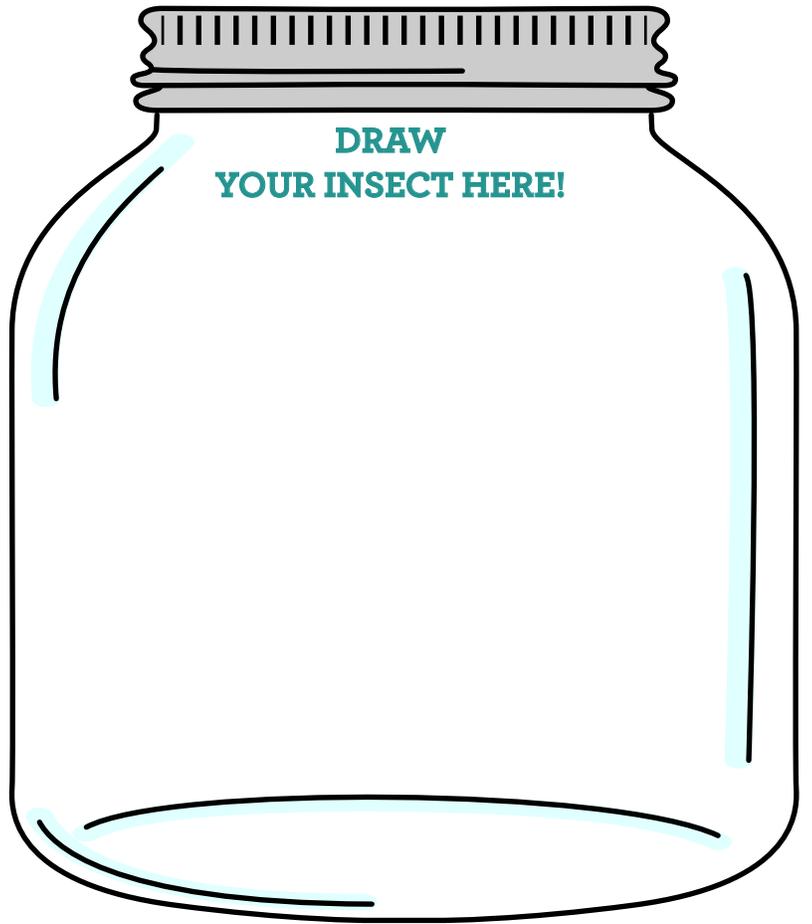
How many legs does it have?

Does it have wings?



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**DRAW
YOUR INSECT HERE!**



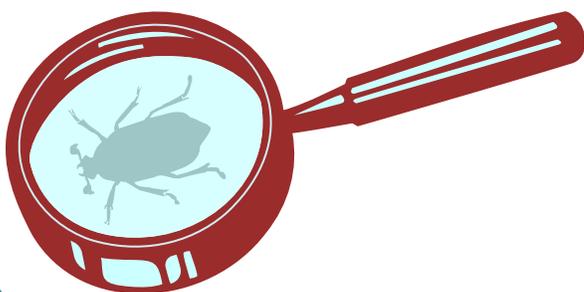
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**DRAW
ANOTHER INSECT HERE!**

