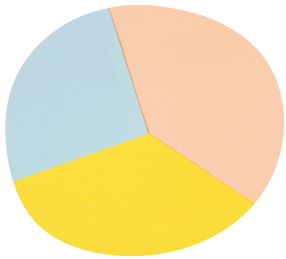


# How to Bug Hunt

Bug hunting in your local environment gives you the chance to learn more about the wildlife living all around you, helping you to connect with the natural world. It can also help develop your observation skills and reduce anxiety about "creepy crawlies".

Look closely and you will find how amazing many of these tiny life-forms are!

## What you'll need (all optional!):



Light-coloured paper



Magnifying glass



Small paintbrush



Cold water

## Where to hunt:



Under rotting wood

We recycle rotting wood!



In long grass



In trees/on leaves

We love visiting flowers!



Around the bases of trees



On flowers

We are using the term 'bugs' in this guide to cover most minibeasts – insects, true bugs and many other invertebrates (animals without a backbone).

# How to Bug Hunt



The most important thing to remember is to very carefully look after anything you find.

Humans are much much larger than any bugs that may be found, and it is so important that we don't kill or harm any creatures, accidentally or on purpose.

Handling bugs is delicate work. The best way to study them is to leave them in the natural environment.

Turn over some logs or shake some grass or branches onto some plain white paper or cloth to reveal some hidden minibeasts!

You could use a magnifying glass or phone camera to look a bit closer.



If you do want to pick up the bugs the best method is to nudge them onto your hand using your little finger, a paintbrush or spoon. Do not pick the bugs up using your fingertips – you might squeeze too hard and hurt them!

If you would like to handle a snail, slug or worm, make sure you first wet your hand in cold water, or a bit of cold mud. This is to stop the animal getting hurt by the oils on your skin or getting too warm in your hands.



Always hold the animal close to the ground in case it is dropped. Stay calm and quiet and allow the creature to roam where it would like to.

Do not handle bugs for too long as they can become stressed and overheated. Always put them back where they came from.



# How to Bug Hunt



Remember not to touch or collect anything that might harm you, like bees and wasps with their stings.

We also recommend you leave creatures with delicate wings such as dragonflies, butterflies and moths.

## What am I Looking at?

There are thousands of types of “invertebrates” (animals with no backbone) in the UK. It can therefore be quite difficult to know exactly what you are looking at! Don't worry though, there are plenty of ways you can work out what you have found!

### Online:

You can use websites like [buglife.org.uk](http://buglife.org.uk) to work out what you have seen, or download a spotting guide from The Parks Trust website.

### ID Guides:

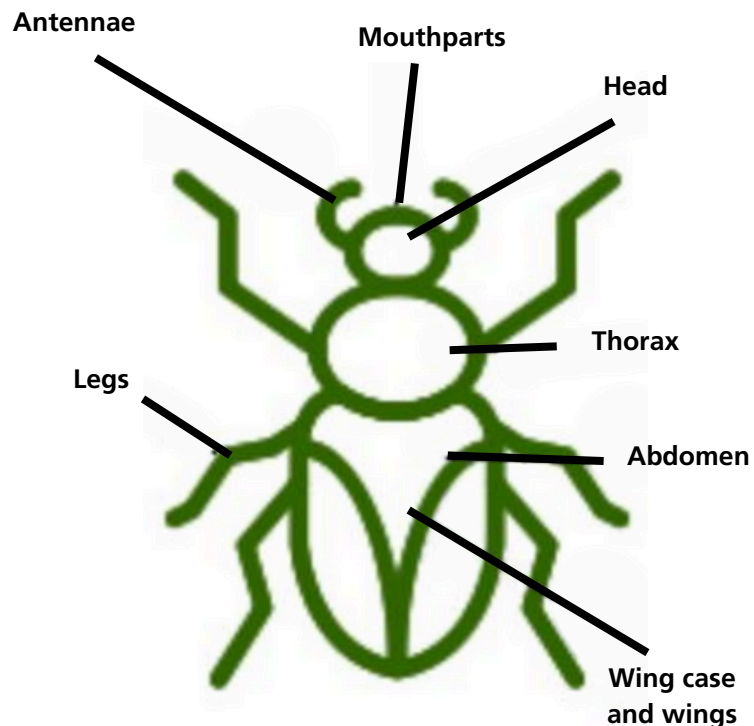
You can buy cheap printed ID guides from charities like the Field Studies Council. There are lots of second-hand books in charity shops too!

### Apps:

There are many wildlife apps including “Picture Insect” and “Animal Kingdom (Invertebrates)”.

### Take a Photo:

If all else fails, you can take a photo of your animal and contact MK Natural History Society or other wildlife forums to see if anyone can help!



“Bugs” include everything from our six-legged insects to legless worms, ‘true bugs’, snails and slugs, and even those with more legs such as spiders, centipedes, millipedes and woodlice.

When identifying insects, you might be asked about certain body parts. The diagram above will help you.

# How to Bug Hunt

## Recording your findings:

### Create a record sheet

Draw up a scientific table to record data such as species, Latin name, date, location and weather. You could even submit your results on apps such as iSpot or the MK Natural History Society, especially if you've seen something unusual!

### Take photos

Create a photographic catalogue of your finds



### Create a nature diary

Use a notepad or sketchpad, and include paintings, drawings or photos in it. Expand your knowledge by researching the animal and adding some fun facts!

### Tally

Keep a score of how many times you manage to find the same species

## Guide to common bugs:

Here are some of the creatures you are likely to find to get you started!



Fly



Wasp



Solitary bee



Bumblebee



Hoverfly

# How to Bug Hunt

## Guide to common bugs:



**Butterfly**



**Woodlouse**



**Millipede**



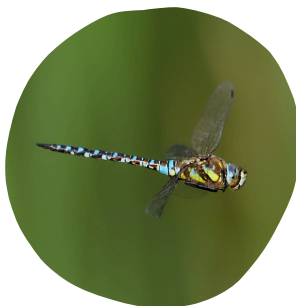
**Centipede**



**Caterpillar**



**Damselfly**



**Dragonfly**



**Earthworm**



**Slug**



**Snail**



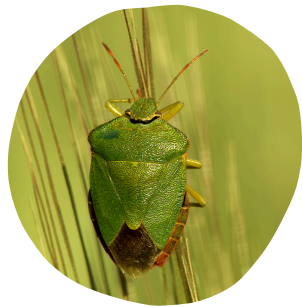
**Black ant**



**Ladybird**



**Ladybird larva**



**Shield bug**



**Grasshopper**



**Click beetle**



**Cardinal beetle**



**Meadow plant bug**



**Rose chafer**



**Spider**