

The Insects

There are an estimated 10,000,000,000,000,000,000 (10 quintillion) individual insects in the world, and 91,000 species -- *that's a lot of insects!*

Insects are found in a variety of habitats, and they take on many different shapes, sizes, and colors. Apart from all of the differences, insects do have four things in common: an exoskeleton, six legs, wings, and three major body segments (head, thorax, and abdomen). Insects are important because they play several roles in nature, and some insects affect our lives, too.



Forests



Prairies



Freshwater

Insect Habitats

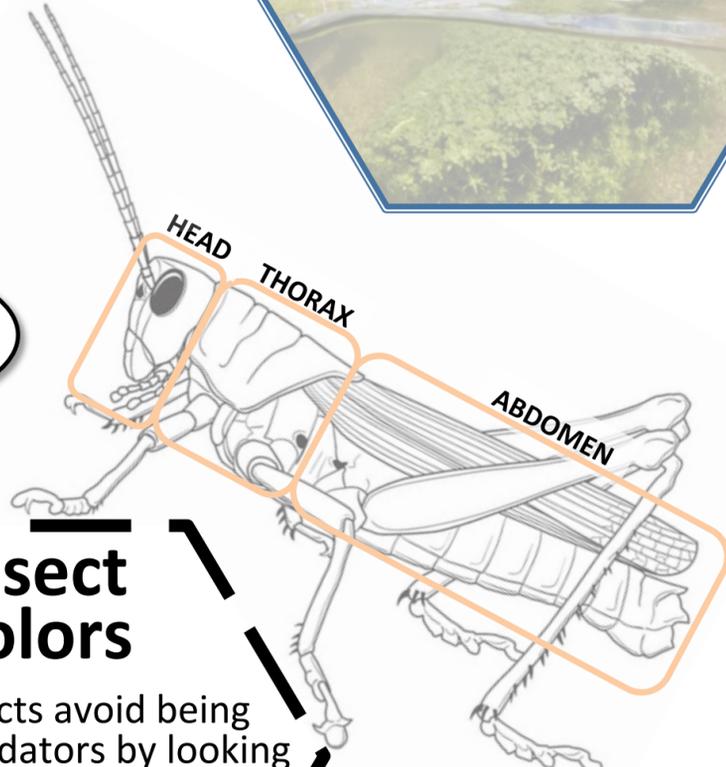
You can find insects all over the place if you know where to look. Here are some that you can find in a prairie, in a forest, in a house, on a farm, and in or around water!



Houses



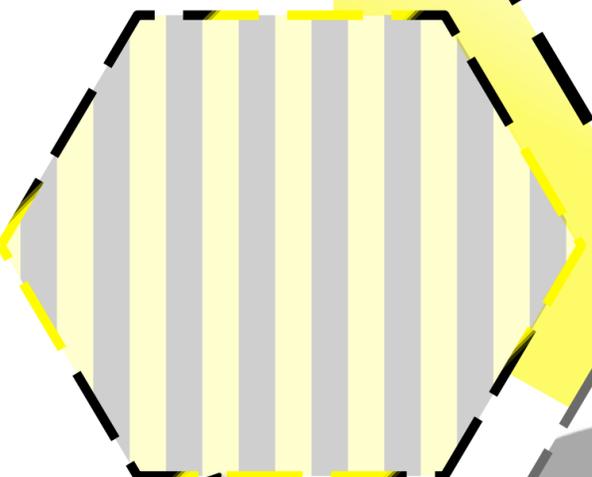
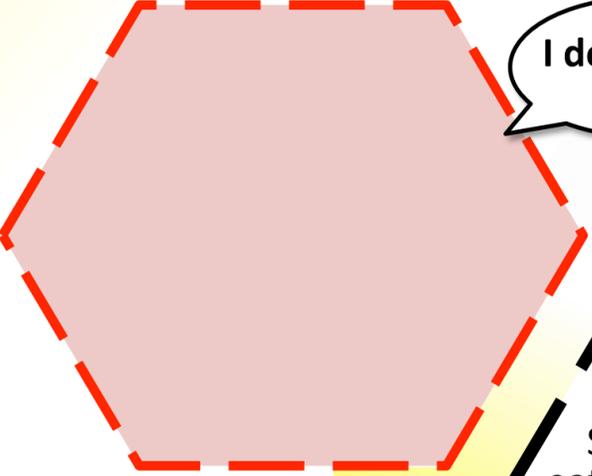
Farms & Fields



I don't taste good!

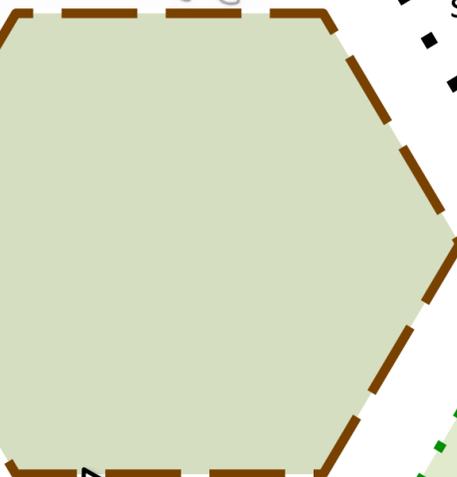
Insect Colors

Some insects avoid being eaten by predators by looking a certain way. They can be camouflaged, have warning colors, or pretend to be something else!



I'll sting you!

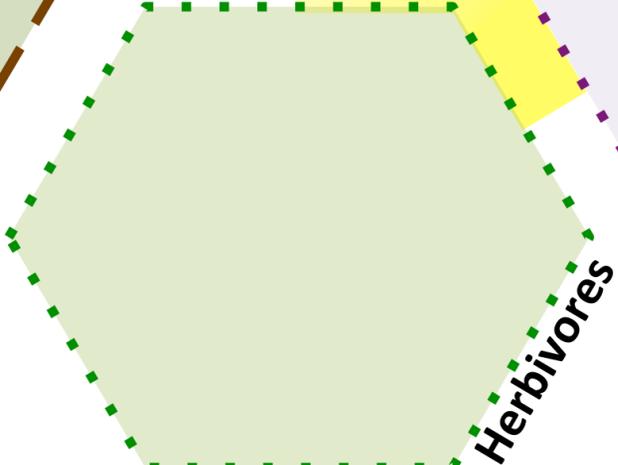
I only look harmful -- but I'm actually not!



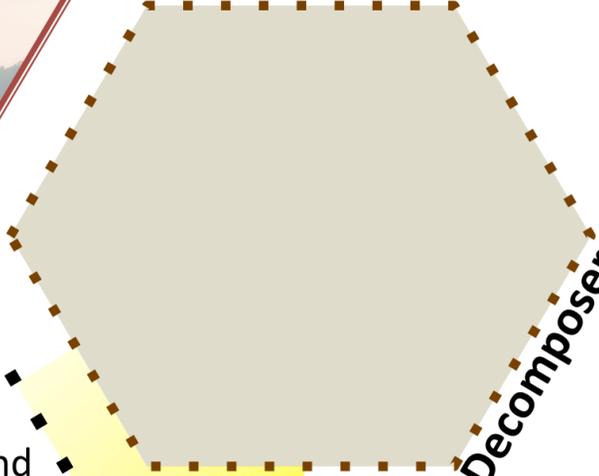
You can't eat me if you can't see me!

Insect Roles

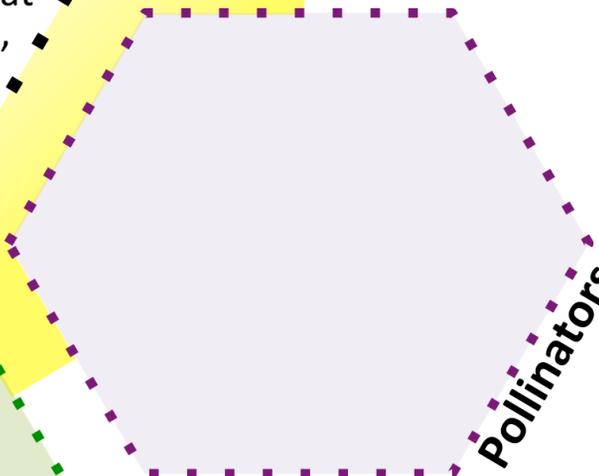
Insects do many helpful things that allow nature and society to function. They eat plants and rotting matter, and they pollinate flowers, among several other roles.



Herbivores



Decomposers



Pollinators