FUN FACT

Ants build amazing underground homes with many tunnels and open spaces to house the colony.

BACKYARD BUGS

ANTS

Small, yet powerful, ants are small insects that can be found almost anywhere! Like their relatives, bees and wasps, ants live in a community and have different jobs. Look for ants as they follow each other and gather food to bring back to their nest.

BEETLES

Being the most diverse of all the insects, there are over 400,000 species of beetles in the world! Their hard “shell” on their backs are actually a pair of hardened wings. Beetles start their lives as grub-like larvae that are usually found underground or in trees. Look for beetles under rocks and logs.

JERUSALEM CRICKETS

Sometimes called “potato bugs”, Jerusalem Crickets are big insects that usually live under rocks and logs, where they eat plant roots and tubers. Despite their name of “cricket”, these large insects are not true crickets but are more related to the giant Wetas of New Zealand! These insects can communicate with each other by thumping their big feet on the ground really quickly. Be careful if you find one, though, as Jerusalem Crickets can give you a pinch with their power jaws!

BUTTERFLIES AND MOTHS

Butterflies, and their night-time relatives, moths, are lovely flying insects. These amazing creatures go through a 4-stage life cycle of egg, caterpillar, cocoon, and adult. Using a long proboscis, these insects drink nectar from flowers. Look for these beautiful animals as they fly around flowers!
FUN FACT
Ladybugs can give off a foul odor when they get startled. Liquid seeps from their legs leaving a yellow stain. Don’t worry though— they are just protecting themselves.

BACKYARD BUGS

EARWIGS
With pinchers at the end of their abdomens, earwigs are very recognizable insects! Their pincers are used for protection, but can also be used to hold onto their food, such as plants and other small insects. Earwigs liked damp areas, so look for them under rocks and logs in the shade.

PILL BUGS & SOW BUGS
Also known as Roly Polies and Woodlice, pill and sow bugs are very common under rocks and logs in cool, damp areas. Despite their name, these “bugs” are not insects or bugs at all, but rather are crustaceans, like crabs, called isopods! Some can roll their bodies into a ball to protect themselves. All pill bugs and sow bugs eat decaying plants and are very important composters.

SPIDERS
Don’t be afraid, spiders are our friends! Related to scorpions and ticks, spiders are arachnids and have only two body segments and 8 legs, while insects have 3 body parts and 6 legs. While some spiders hunt for their food, most of them catch their meal with a sticky web! Look for beautiful and curious jumping spiders in tall grass, or look for a spider in its web hanging in a tree or bush!

LADYBUGS
Also called Lady Birds or Lady Beetles, these red spotted insects are a garden’s friend. Ladybugs love to munch on aphids, whiteflies, & mites, all voracious pests that harm plants. Ladybugs are actually beetles – they have a hard shell on their backs. Unlike some beetles, all ladybugs can fly. Their wings lie underneath the outer shell.