

Build your own BUG HOTEL!

Bug hotels are a wonderful addition to any garden, park, or outdoor space! They provide a home for insects and in return the insects will increase biodiversity, pollinate plants, and prey on pests.

Why create a bug hotel?

With natural habitats under increasing pressure and many already lost or damaged here's your chance to give nature a helping hand by creating a home where it can thrive.

Nature presents an endless number of places where bugs and insects can shelter. Holes in dead wood, spaces in between rocks, and piles of fallen leaves all provide the perfect home where small creatures can escape from predators and bad weather.

What makes a good bug hotel?

The key is to try and recreate a habitat, which closely resembles what you'd find in the wild. Try to create as many small spaces as possible using different materials that the insects will come across in the wild. It's also worth remembering that some insects prefer damp spaces where others prefer dry so your hotel needs to offer both.



What materials could you use?

Dead wood. This is often the home of choice for centipedes and woodlice who take refuge in the crevices under the bark. Dead wood supports many different types of fungi and is an essential material for the larvae of wood boring beetles, such as the stag beetle.

Hollow tubes. These can be created with old bamboo canes or hollow plant stems, which are then placed inside plastic drainpipes. By using different sizes canes or stems you can cater for different species.

Straw and hay. Provides many opportunities for invertebrates to burrow down into and find a safe, dry place to hibernate.

Dry leaves. The leaves replicate the woodland floor and provide a home for invertebrates.

Loose bark. The ideal place for beetles, centipedes, spiders, and woodlice who all love being beneath the decaying wood and bark.

Corrugated cardboard. When placed inside a waterproof cylinder this can be used to create a home for lacewing and their larvae, which consume large amounts of aphids and other garden pests.

What's the difference between a bug and an insect?

If all bugs are insects but not all insects are bugs how do you tell the difference?

BUGS



The word 'bug' is often used to refer to any very small insect, which has legs. A true bug belongs to the order of insects known as Hemiptera, which comprise around 50,000–80,000 species and are characterised as having tough forewings and a mouthpart known as a stylet, which is designed to suck juices from plants.

INSECTS



Insects belong to the class known as Insecta and are characterised as having three body parts, three pairs of legs, and usually two pairs of wings. They are the largest group of all living things, containing more than a million identified species, compared with 240,000 flowering plants and 4,500 mammals. They can be found in all habitats, except the deep sea and the Polar Regions.

What do bugs and insects eat?

Bugs and insects eat a huge range of foods. About half of them are plant eaters who feed on leaves, roots, seeds, nectar, or wood. Praying mantises are predators who hunt other smaller creatures whereas fleas and lice are parasites that eat the flesh or blood of larger animals without killing them.

Why are bugs and insects so successful?

They have an amazing ability to adapt to and to survive in virtually any environment. There's almost nowhere on land where they cannot live and almost nothing they cannot eat, which means they can thrive in even the toughest of environments.

How do bugs and insects defend themselves?

Many rely on camouflage to blend into their natural surroundings and to remain out of sight of predators while others are armed with stinger or poisons.

FIVE INSECT FACTS



1

6% of the Earth's surface is covered by tropical rainforests and around 80% of all insect species live there. It is estimated that there are still 9 million species of insects and spiders yet to be discovered

2

To survive the cold of winter months many insects replace their body water with a chemical called glycerol, which acts as an antifreeze against the temperatures

3

Insects have been present on Earth for about 350 million years whereas humans have only been around for 130,000 years

4

At least two thirds of all living species on the Earth are spiders and insects

5

It is estimated that there are 1.5 billion insects for every person on Earth

