



Stay Local and have your own mini beast hunt – see what you can find.

Spring is well and truly kicking in now, and lots of creepy crawlies are starting to come out and about. So it is a good time to go out in the fresh air and take a closer look at nature. You can go on a minibeast hunt in your own garden. You'll soon notice it's teeming with wildlife!

Here are some really cool facts before you go out looking for small creatures hiding in the outdoors.

- Minibeasts are 'small creatures', like worms, snails, insects and spiders. The scientific term for them is 'invertebrates' – a creature without a backbone.
- Minibeasts make their homes in lots of places, both inside our homes (spiders) and outside under logs, stones or leaves, in ponds, in trees, in grass and in soil.
- Some minibeasts eat plants or flower nectar; others eat other minibeasts!
- Slugs have four noses.
- Minibeasts are crucial for our survival: they recycle dead matter and waste products; they help with plant pollination; they are a crucial source of food in the ecosystem.
- Some worms have ten hearts!
- Worms have existed for around 600 million years.
- Because they don't have a backbone, minibeasts tend to have other structures which support and protect them. Snails have shells, while many insects and spiders have an 'exoskeleton', which is a hard casing on their outside.

- The colour and appearance of minibeasts are key to their survival. Many minibeasts have very good camouflage, blending them into their environment so that they can hide from predators or creep up on prey. Other minibeasts, like the monarch butterfly, have bright colours to warn predators that they are either poisonous or might taste disgusting.
- Most minibeasts tend to use their senses of smell, touch and taste to experience the world around them, rather than their sight or hearing. They use features such as antennae, small hairs or taste receptors to do this.

Can you find...

- a worm after a spring shower
- a bumblebee looking for nectar
- a spotty ladybird exploring the grass
- a slimy snail in a dark damp spot
- a butterfly basking in the sunshine?





What else did you find?

