

Woodlouse
Oniscus asellus



Woodlice breathe through gills on their belly. They have seven pairs of legs. As they get bigger, their exoskeletons fall off one half at a time as a new one grows.



Slug
Arion ater



Despite their bad reputation with gardeners, some slugs are useful decomposers as they eat only dead plants.



Garden snail
Helix aspersa



As a snail grows so does its shell and it always fits perfectly! Snails breathe through the same hole they use to go to the toilet.



7-spot ladybird
Coccinella 7-punctata



There are 42 species in the UK. Ladybirds are brightly coloured to warn predators that they taste horrid.



Earthworm
Lumbricus rubellus



Worms help gardeners by providing air to plant roots and releasing nutrients as they digest and excrete soil.



Eyed hawk-moth
Smerinthus ocellata



A large moth that flashes its eye spots when threatened. The caterpillars feed on willow or apple leaves.



What's that minibeast?

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Blue-tailed damselfly

Ischnura elegans



Their abdomen (body) is usually all black with a bright blue segment near the end. Commonly found around ponds.



Alderfly

Sialis lutaria



The young (larvae) live in silt at the bottom of ponds and are an important food for fish. The adults often appear in great numbers in April or May.



Garden spider

Araneus diadematus



They spin orb webs to catch flying insects. The spiders sit in the centre of the web and rush out to wrap any caught insects in silk.



Emperor dragonfly

Anax imperator



Britain's largest dragonfly can eat its own weight of food in 30 minutes. They pluck other insects out of the air using their legs.



Earwig

Forficula auricularia



Easily recognised by the pincers at the hind end of their bodies, earwigs are generally nocturnal. They are very shy and hide in dark cracks and crevices during the day.

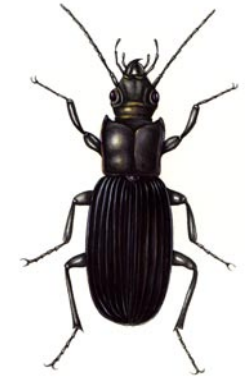


Violet ground beetle

Carabus violaceus



These fast moving predators hunt at night, crushing their prey with their strong jaws. They often hide away under logs or in soil during daylight.



Peacock butterfly

Inachis io



Their eye spots distract predators and the underside of their wings are dark brown. The adults hibernate over winter.



Pond olive mayfly

Cloeon dipterum



Adult mayflies only live for one or two days and don't even have a mouth to feed! The young live only in unpolluted freshwater.



Honey bee

Apis mellifera



Bees become active in spring, visiting flowers to feed on pollen and nectar. Humans have harvested bees' honey for centuries.



There are more than 25,000 kinds of minibeasts (invertebrates) in the UK. How many can you spot?