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# Extreme Insects



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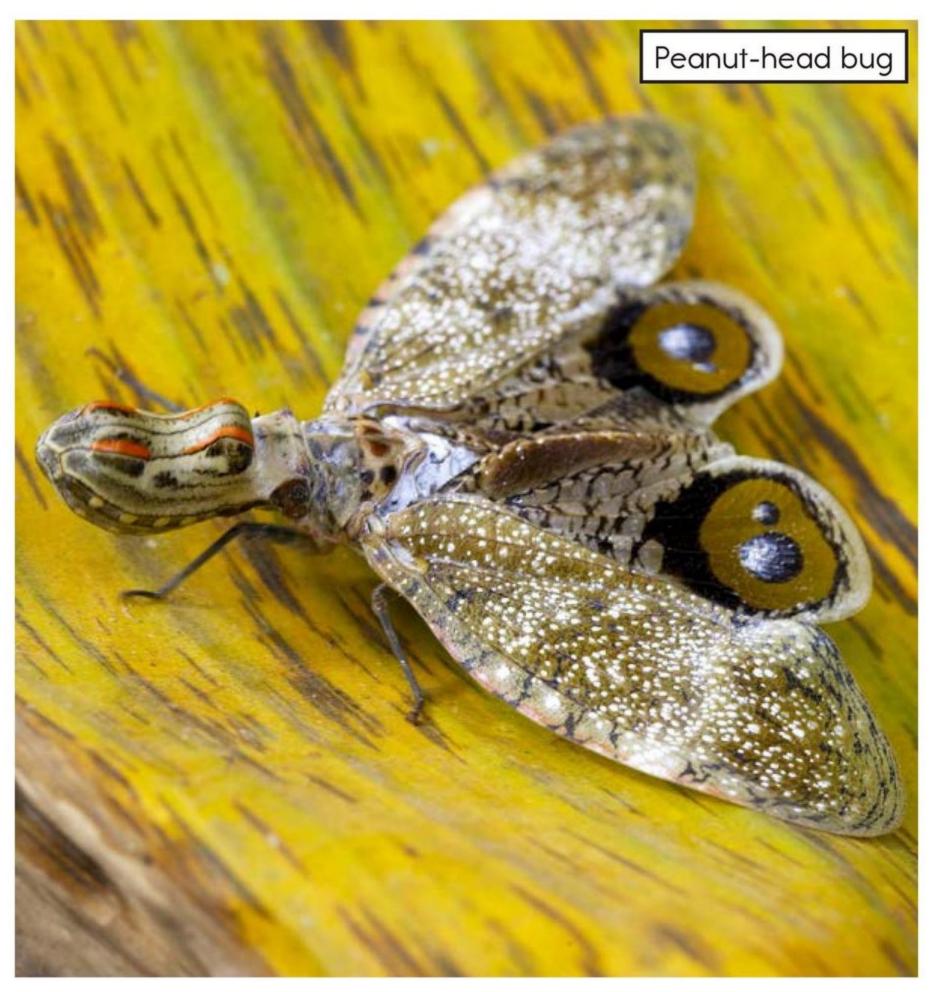
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A robber fly dines on another insect.

## Introduction

Insects are always in danger.
They have many enemies.
They are food for each other as well as other animals.



A peanut-head bug's looks and its skunk-like spray help keep it alive.

Insects have many **traits** that help them stay alive.

These traits include size, looks, and weapons.

Let's look at some of the extreme traits insects have that help them.



Goliath beetles are one of the largest insects in the world.

#### **Extreme Size**

This beetle can grow as long as a pen. It can weigh as much as a banana. Extreme size and a hard cover protect it from its enemies.



A walking stick's size and looks help keep it from being eaten.

This insect can grow longer than a new pencil.

Its size frightens smaller insects away.

Animals don't eat it because
they think it is just a big stick.



Trash bugs carry leftovers on their backs to hide from animals that might eat them.

#### Extreme Look-Alikes

Many insects look like other things. Their looks help them hide from animals that want to eat them.



Can you find the insect in this picture?

Some insects look like parts of plants. They can look like leaves, flowers, stems, or even thorns.



A Sphinx moth caterpillar can puff up its spots so it looks like a cobra.

There are insects with large fake eyes to scare hungry animals away. When scared, this **caterpillar** can make itself look like a snake.



Ambush bugs have thick front legs to catch bees and flies.

# Extreme Weapons

Some insects have extreme weapons to help them survive.
Some of these insects use their weapons to get food.
Others use their weapons to keep from becoming food.



An antlion larva traps and eats ants with its extreme jaws.

This insect digs a pit in the sand. It traps ants in the pit.
Then it grabs an ant in its large, sharp jaws. Yummy!



The assassin bug's beak makes it deadly.

This bug jumps on other insects.

It stabs them with its sharp beak.

It shoots out **poison** that turns their insides to goo.

Then the bug sucks out the goo. Slurp!

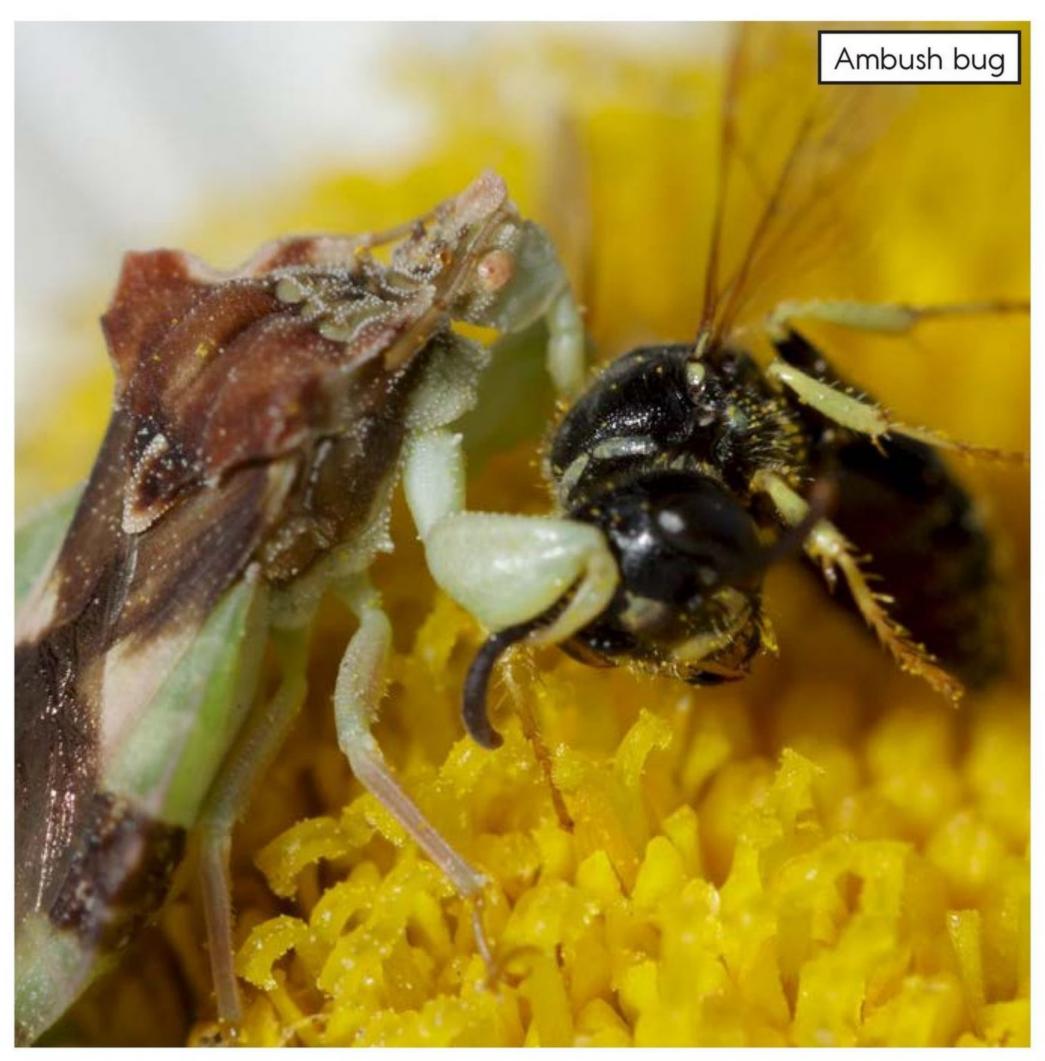


The bombardier beetle's spray keeps enemies away.

#### Watch out!

This beetle sprays out boiling hot poison when touched.

It stops animals from trying to eat it.



Ambush bugs hide near flowers to catch their prey.

## Conclusion

Insects have many ways to protect themselves.

Their size, color, and weapons can help them stay alive.

# Glossary

caterpillar the second stage of the life

cycle of a butterfly or moth;

the larva stage (p. 10)

extreme great or much more than usual

(p. 5)

poison a substance that can kill animals

or plants (p. 13)

**protect** to keep something from being

hurt (p. 6)

**traits** qualities that make living things

different from one another (p. 5)

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Front cover: Ambush bug

Back cover: Robber fly eating a meal

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