

# Mini beast fact cards

# Front Sheet 1



## Hoverfly

What do they eat?

Do they sting?

Why do they lay eggs near aphids?



## LADYBIRD

Do they get more spots?

What's that yellow stuff that comes out?

What do the larvae look like?



## GROUND BEETLE

Can they fly?

What do they eat?

How do they defend themselves?

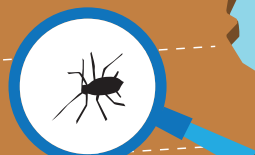


## Aphid

What do they eat?

How do aphids spread diseases?

Why do ants like aphids?

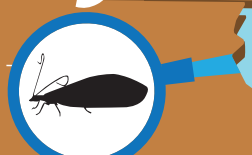


## LACEWING

What do they eat?

What do they do in the winter?

Why are they called 'aphid lions'?



### How to make...



1. Print out both the front and back sheets
2. Stick them back to back with glue
3. Cut the cards out along the dotted lines
4. Your cards are ready! Now you can share your new mini beast knowledge.

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## GROUND BEETLE



In most species of ground beetle their wing cases (elytra) are joined together. This means they can't fly but they do have a protective armour.

Both larvae and adults are carnivorous and often specialise in eating slugs or snails, as well as eating a range of other insects and carrion.

When threatened, they can discharge a noxious, highly irritant fluid (harmless to humans) from the tip of their abdomen.

## LADYBIRD



A ladybird's spots are the pattern for that species. They don't change during its lifetime.

If a ladybird is startled it releases 'reflex blood' which is strong-smelling and toxic to many of its predators.

When the larva first hatches it is black and grub-like. As it eats and grows, it sheds its skin three times, getting bigger and more bug-like each time.



## HOVERFLY



Hoverflies feed mainly on nectar and pollen. The larvae of many species eat aphids – around 50 in a day.

Although hoverflies look a bit like wasps this is just a disguise to protect them from predators. They have no sting.

The female lays eggs near to aphids so that there's food for the larvae to eat when they hatch. She tracks them down by the scent of the honeydew.

## LACEWING



Adult lacewings eat pollen, nectar and honeydew. The larvae eat aphids. They feed for around a month and can eat around 600 aphids in this time.

Adult lacewings hibernate over winter so they need somewhere dry and sheltered to hide away.

The larvae are called 'aphid lions' because of their ferocious appetite for aphids. They have sickle-shaped jaws to pierce prey and suck out body juices.



## APHID



Aphids feed on plants by sticking their sharp mouthparts (stylets) into the plant and sucking out the sap.

If one potato plant is infected with a virus an aphid that feeds on it can spread the virus to healthy plants.

Plant sap is high in sugar, but low in protein so aphids have to eat a lot of it. This makes them produce sugary honeydew, which ants like to eat.

Don't forget to take a snap of your activities and share them with us!

Remember to tag us and use the hashtag #TopTatieTips



# Mini beast fact cards

# Front Sheet 2

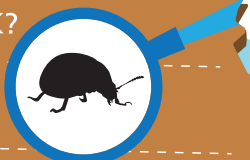


## COLORADO BEETLE

Do they live in the UK?

What do they eat?

Why are they such a threat to potatoes?



## EARTHWORM

How big can they grow?

How do they help plants?

Do they breathe?



## SLUG

Are all slugs pests?

Do slugs have teeth?

How do slugs see?



## CUTWORM

What are cutworms?

Why are cutworms called that?

Do they have legs?

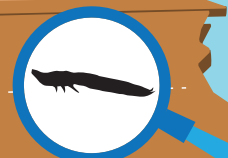


## WIREWORM

What do they eat?

Do they have legs?

How long do they stay like that?



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## Slug



There are around 30 species of slugs in the UK. The main two that are serious pests to growers are the common garden slug and common keeled slug.

Slugs eat using a radula which is a tongue-like organ that is covered with around 27,000 tiny tooth-like denticles.

Slugs have two retractable pairs of tentacles. The upper ones have light sensitive eyespots on the end and they can be regrown if lost.

## EARTHWORM



Earthworms range in length from a tiny one millimetre to a massive three metres!

Earthworms eat organic matter and break it down into smaller pieces which releases the nutrients for plants to use.

Earthworms breathe through their skin. This is why they come to the surface when it rains, otherwise they risk drowning in the waterlogged soil.

## COLORADO BEETLE



Colorado beetles are a major pest in America. We do not have them in the UK and we want to keep it that way.

The beetles and their larvae eat potato plants. A single larvae can eat 40cm<sup>2</sup> of potato leaves in one day.

An infestation can skeletonise and kill a potato crop, and the beetles are very hard to get rid of.

## WIREWORM



They feed on plant roots. When they come across a potato it's a feast!

Wireworms have three pairs of small legs at the head end.

It can take up to four years to complete the larval stage of life before a wireworm pupates and turns into a brown click beetle.



## CUTWORM



Cutworms are moth caterpillars that live in the soil.

They tend to feed at the base of plants so they often chew through the stem – 'cutting' the plant off so that it dies.

They have three pairs of legs at the head end and five pairs of clasping prolegs on their abdomen, although these are hard to see as they usually curl up when disturbed.

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