

Garden - What lives in the garden?



Fact

- A creature's home in your garden is called its habitat.
- Each garden will have different creatures living in it.
- All the creatures that live in your garden have different jobs to do.
- Some work as garbage collectors eating up rotting plant matter (like slaters and slugs) and some work at population control eating the other creatures (like spiders and preying mantis).
- Flying insects like bees and wasps work to pollinate the flowers in your garden.

Do you know

- Aphids are a pest that suck the goodness out of the plant they are living on, generally making it very sick.
- Generally where there's dirt there's worms. The better the soil – the more worms you will find.
- Slaters and slugs like to live under a piece of wood, say a rotting branch where it is damp and dark. You might even find a snail or two here.
- Ants like to live in grassy areas.
- In a hedge you might find aphids, spiders, cicada's or maybe even a cicada skin.
- Some creatures you only find in certain parts of the country. Insects like Passionvine Hoppers are only found in the North Island and the north of the South Island.

Experiments you can do

Map out your garden and investigate what lives there. You never know what you might find!

What you need:

Four tent pegs

A long piece of string about 4 meters long (Instead of the pegs and string you could use a hoola hoop)

A pad of paper

Pens and pencils

Someone to help you

What you do:

Get someone to help you mark out a square in your garden using the tent pegs and string.

Make sure you've got some grass area, garden and bushes in your square because each area will have different creatures living there.

Draw a map of the square showing where the grass, garden and plants are. Then write down a description of the area. Then the fun begins.

Look closely at all the plants and see how many creatures you can find and name. Draw the creatures onto your map and write down what they are and where you found them. Carefully lift up the leaves and any pieces of wood and gently part the grass to see what you can find. Leave all the creatures where you find them because that is their home but maybe you could come back in a few days and see if they're still there.

Other Investigations

Choose one of the creatures in your garden and find out more about it. Where does it like to live? Does it like lots of sunlight or does it choose to live in a dark damp place? What does it like to eat? And what likes to eat it? How many babies does it have at a time and how does it look after those babies? Can you find that kind of creature in your garden all year round? Where does it go in winter?

Maybe you could let me know what creature you choose and all the things you find out about it.

Jokes

What did the spider say to the ladybug?

Don't bug me.