

Woodlouse

Oniscus asellus



Woodlice breathe through gills on their stomach. 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.



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What's that minibeast?



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WWT London Wetland Centre, Queen Elizabeth's Walk, London, SW13 9WT
Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust (WWT)
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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 sticky 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 ?