

Insect Family Tree

The 6 groups of animals described below have physical qualities that are unique to their individual groups. These characteristics help scientists place animals in categories and find out how they are related.

Read the descriptions below and identify the picture with the group. Cut out the picture and paste it in the appropriate square on the Insect Family Tree page or try drawing a particular type of that insect in the appropriate space.

Hymenoptera: means membranous wing; Hymen = membrane, ptera = wings. Winged forms of ants, bees and wasps possess 2 pair of membranous wings.

Lepidoptera: means scale wings; lepto = scale, ptera = wings. Wings of butterflies and moths are often covered with a colorful mosaic of minute scales.

Diptera: means two wings; di = two, ptera = wings. Flies do very well with their single pair of fore wings. The hind pair are often reduced to a couple of knob-like balance organs.

Coleoptera: means sheath wings; coleo = sheath, ptera = wings. Beetles front pair of wings are modified to hardened casings, known as elytra, to protect the hind wings and body below.

Odonata: means tooth. Apart from jet propulsion, the aquatic nymph often possess an extendable jaw capable of catching prey some distance away from the rest of the head.

Arthropod: means segmented feet; arthro = joint, poda = foot. Including insects, this huge group contain animals often mistaken for insects such as spiders and centipedes.

