

NHMU: Insect Family Tree

Summary

Students will identify and match insects on the Insect Family Tree.

Group Size

Individual

Materials

- [Insect Families Handout](#) (pdf)
- [Insect Family Tree](#) (pdf)

Background for Teachers

Below are six classifications scientists use to identify and group insects according to their individual and shared characteristics.

- 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; lepid = 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 contains animals often mistaken for insects such as spiders and centipedes.

Instructional Procedures

Have students read the Insect Families Handout as a class or individually. Next, students should cut out the pictures at the bottom of the Handout and paste them onto the Insect Family Tree onto the appropriate square.

Bibliography

This lesson plan was developed by the [Utah Museum of Natural History](#).

Authors

[Utah LessonPlans](#)