



BUG HUNTING BASICS



Whether you have a big or a tiny garden, or even just a window box, there's probably some BUGS living there. Follow this guide to become a bug-hunting expert and let us know what you've seen!

Can you think of a more scientific name for a 'Bug'? Hint...its the word for an animal without a backbone

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EQUIPMENT - you don't actually *need* any equipment to bug hunt, but having some of these things can help

- ✓ A bug pot - buy one or make your own
- ✓ Books, guides or the internet to help identify
- ✓ A magnifier
- ✓ A camera, phone, tablet etc.
- ✓ A beating tray or white sheet
- ✓ A white plate, tub etc. (which you don't mind getting messy)
- ✓ An adult to give you a hand

CHALLENGE 1 - Where might bugs live?

What sorts of places do you think bugs like to hide? What about when they're looking for food, where might you find them? Have a think about your garden and write down or draw the habitats you think bugs might live in:





SAFE BUG HUNTING RULES

Keep yourselves, other people and the bugs safe by always following these rules



Bug hunting can get messy, whilst you're out and about always keep your hands AWAY from your face, including not eating or drinking

If you find anything that looks sharp (eg. thorns) or nasty (eg. poo!) don't touch

All bugs are brilliant, but some are very well defended, look at but don't touch any bugs that might sting or bite - this includes wasps, bees + ants - ask an adult if you're not sure

Be gentle with bugs! They're much smaller than we are and can be delicate. If you're touching and picking them up be very careful. If you're putting them in a pot make sure not to trap any legs or wings as you close it

CHALLENGE 2 - Get bug hunting!!

Once you've got your equipment together, thought about where to look and read the safe bug hunting rules, you're all ready to go! Head out into your garden and see what you can find. Here are some tips...

Look under things... logs, stones, etc.



Dig through a bit of soil



Use your bug pot for a closer look.

- 1) Find the bug
- 2) Open the pot and put it next to the bug
- 3) Carefully encourage the bug in with your finger or a stick or piece of grass



Use your magnifier. Cover 1 eye and hold it close to the other eye, move closer to the bug until you can see it clearly

Look near flowers - lots of bugs eat nectar





- Use your beating tray or sheet**
- 1) Get some of your family to help you hold or position the tray underneath the branches of a bush or tree
 - 2) Gently tap or shake the tree or the bush
 - 3) Invertebrates from the plant will fall into the tray for you to have a closer look at
 - 4) Make sure you put them back in there afterwards



Look in
leaf litter
(fallen
leaves)

Look
under
leaves



DON'T FORGET to put the bugs back where you've found them once you're done looking



- Use your white plate or tub**
- 1) Put the bugs very carefully on here to make it easier to see their features
 - 2) Or fill the plate with leaf litter or soil and search thoroughly for anything hiding in there

CHALLENGE 3- Identify what you've found

We have many thousands of invertebrates in the UK (~40,000 species in fact!). This means its sometimes hard to decide exactly which one of these you've found. Here are some top tips...

1

Look for help - there are lots of things you can use to help you

2

Find which group it belongs to first

3

Then try and work out the species - sometimes you won't be able to, but this doesn't matter, its still important to know what group its in





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Where to look for help...

1) **Books and guides.** Some books are much more detailed than others. Scientific Keys are often the most accurate but are often very complicated and need you to know lots of scientific words to understand them. If you're only just learning, [guides sold here](#) might be useful.



2) **The internet.** There are loads of useful bug-related resources online. [Here's a list](#) of places you could look.



3) **Other people.** Ask your family what they think and take a photo. Upload your photo to [iNaturalist](#), or email it to us, so that other people, including bug experts, can help you identify it



Find out what group it belongs in first

Invertebrates are split into different groups, all the species in a group share features that put them in that group. Counting the legs can be a good place to start. Follow the keys for crawling bugs or flying bugs and see where you get.



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6 LEGS... they'll be part of one of the many **INSECT** groups (like bees, butterflies, beetles...)

8 LEGS ...they're an **ARACHNID** (like spiders)



(c) Steve McWilliam

14 LEGS... they're a **crustacean** (like woodlice)

MORE THAN 14 LEGS ... they're a **myriapod** (like centipedes and millipedes)

(c) Shane Farrell



NO LEGS... they might be a **MOLLUSC** (like slugs and snails) or an **ANNELID** (like earthworms).

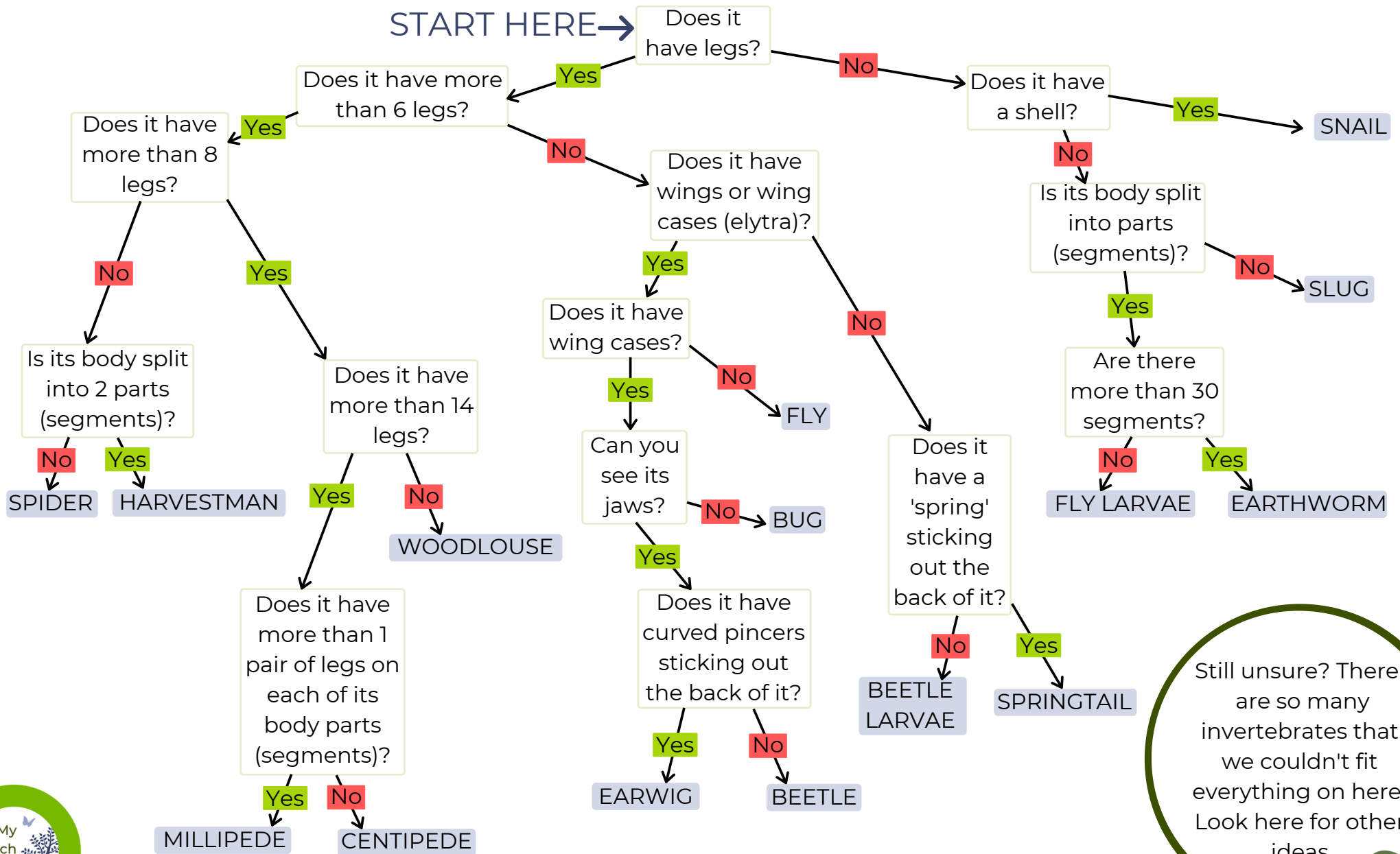
THEN try to find the SPECIES.

Sometimes this will be easy, sometimes its more difficult.



CRAWLING BUGS KEY

Follow the arrows to help work out which group your bug belongs in



Still unsure? There are so many invertebrates that we couldn't fit everything on here! Look here for other ideas

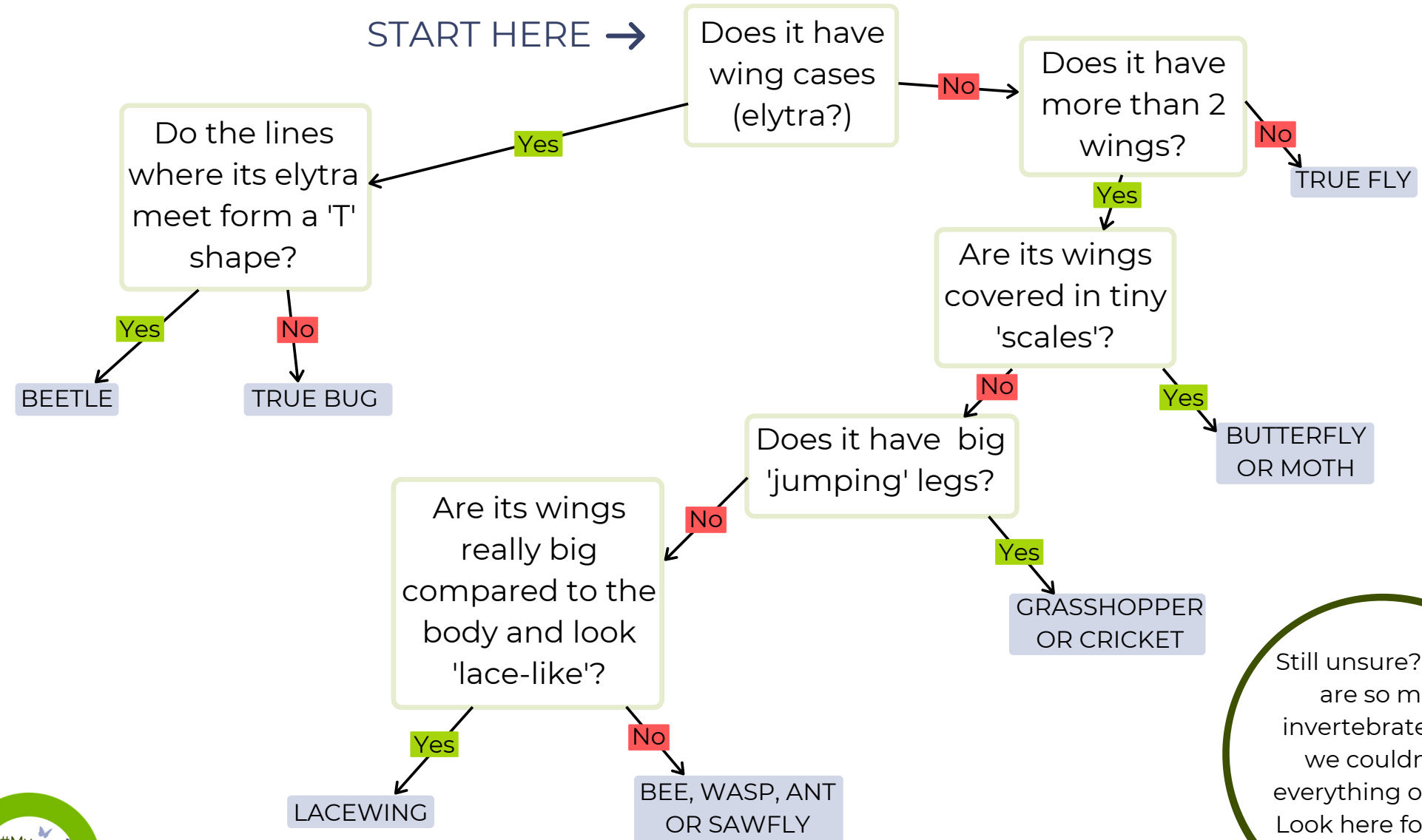


RECORD

FLYING BUGS KEY

Follow the arrows to help work out which group your bug belongs in

START HERE →



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CHALLENGE 4 - Record what you've found

It's really important to make a note of what you've found. This makes it easier for you to remember, but also means you can let other people know how you've got on. If you can, take a photo too.

Use the space below and hints to draw and write about the invertebrates you find:

How many legs does it have?

Does it have antennae?

What is its mouth like?

What colours is it?

Does it have wings?

Is it an adult or a larvae?

Where did you find it?

What was it doing?

Use the table on the next page to record more details about each invertebrate



BUG HUNT - WHAT HAVE YOU FOUND?

DATE:

YOUR NAME:

GRID REFERENCE:

What group of invertebrates is it part of?

Species of invertebrate (if you know it)

Habitat found in

Life stage - is it a larvae or adult?

Male or female? (If you can tell)

TELL US WHAT YOU FOUND: You can email us: info@record-lrc.co.uk, or even better upload what you've found to iNaturalist. Find out how here: http://www.record-lrc.co.uk/c2.aspx?Mod=Article&ArticleID=MyPatch_Spotted

#My Patch

Tanyptera Trust