Ladybugs, earthworms, butterflies and other small insects nourish healthy gardens by getting rid of pests, enriching soil and helping plants grow. Explore your garden, backyard or other outdoor spaces to find them.
Go on a Garden Safari

Some insects like to hide under leaves or on plants. Can you find them?

- Roll over logs and dig in the soil to discover earthworms and other small insects.
- Have an adult help you put insects you find into the container to get a closer look.

**Ladybugs** help gardens by eating aphids and other pests. *Aphids* suck juices from plants, harming the garden. Look for these tiny green or black pests along plant stems.

- Find a ladybug and watch it for a while.
- Use your magnifying glass to look at it closely. How many spots does it have? Does it have wings?

**Earthworms** are important to gardens because they eat dead plants and add nutrients to the soil.

- Use a trowel to gently dig up a small amount of soil from your yard or garden. Break it apart to find worms and other creatures.
- Look closely at a worm. The muscular segments on its body help it move. Do you see these parts working? Which end is the head?

What to bring exploring:

- Magnifying glass
- Small clear container with lid
- Trowel for digging soil
Gardens need **butterflies** and other pollinators to produce food and make seeds for new plants. **Pollinators** move tiny grains of pollen from one flower to another, fertilizing the plant and allowing fruits to grow.

- Look for butterflies in your garden. How many different types can you find? Which flowers do they visit most often?
- Butterflies drink nectar from flowers using a long, straw-like mouth part called a **proboscis**. Watch a butterfly on a flower. Can you see its proboscis? Is there any pollen on its body?

**Snails** are slow-moving **mollusks** with a slimy body and a protective shell. Slugs are like snails without a shell. Both are garden pests because they eat fruit and destroy plants.

- Keep snails out of your garden by removing old wood and damp leaves where they hide.

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**Pollination**

One part of the flower called the “**ANther**” makes pollen. Another part of the flower, called the “**Pistil**” leads to the eggs.

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*Keep exploring to learn more about the living things in your garden!*