

# Minibeast Videos PowerPoint

## Information Sheet

### Introduction

This PowerPoint would be a brilliant visual aid to start a topic on minibeasts. It includes links to six short clips of recognisable insects and other creatures. Below, we have included extra information to accompany the videos.

### Butterfly

Butterflies are insects with a life cycle that has four stages: egg, larva (caterpillar), chrysalis and adult (butterfly).

This video shows a 'plain tiger' (also known as 'African queen') butterfly, which is widespread in Africa, Asia and Australia. Did you know that this butterfly is toxic to predators? It drinks the nectar from a poisonous plant called milkweed. The bright colours of the wings warn birds and other predators not to eat it! Interestingly, other butterflies (that aren't toxic) have copied this butterfly's wing patterns.

There are 59 species of butterfly in the UK. Some common butterflies that you might find that look similar to the one in this video are shown below:



Red Admiral



Speckled Wood



Monarch

### Dragonfly

Dragonflies are insects that roamed the earth 300 million years ago (even before the dinosaurs!). Their life cycle has three stages: egg, larva (nymph) and the adult dragonfly. As a nymph, the dragonfly lives underwater in ponds and lakes and is a fierce predator of tadpoles, mosquitoes and even fish! It can stay like this for up to two years. The nymph then crawls out of the water and cracks open to reveal the body and four wings of the adult dragonfly. They are expert fliers that can fly up, down and even hover in the air like a helicopter, speeding through the air at a maximum of 30 mph!



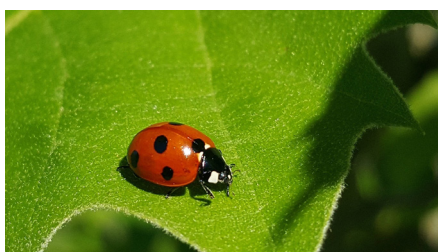
Common Darter

In the UK, there are 36 species of dragonfly and 21 species of damselfly (which are thinner and more delicate). This video shows a male Common Darter dragonfly, native to the UK.

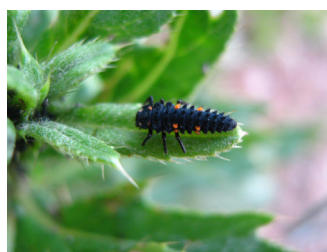
## Ladybird

Ladybirds are brightly coloured insects that are easy to recognise. Across the world, there are about 5,000 different species and they can be called ladybugs or lady beetles. The most familiar species in the UK is the seven-spot ladybird which (usually!) has seven black spots on its two wing cases. Ladybirds and their larvae eat aphids and other pests that eat plants, so gardeners love them! Many ladybirds are mainly red, but they can be orange and have lots of spots, or no spots at all! The bright colours warn predators that they are not good to eat. The life cycle of a ladybird has four stages: egg, larva, pupa and adult. The larvae look like tiny black and orange crocodiles!

This video shows the non-native and invasive Harlequin ladybird which first arrived in the UK in 2004. It breeds faster than native ladybirds and eats their eggs and larvae.



Seven Spot Ladybird



Ladybird larva

## Snail

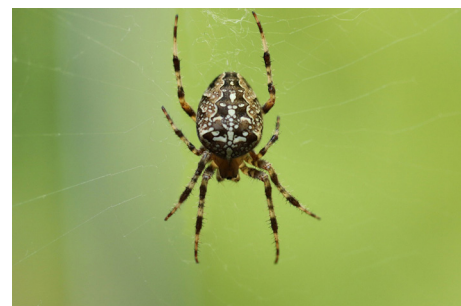
Snails are nocturnal molluscs that hibernate in the winter. They don't like sunlight so they come out at night, especially after heavy rainfall. There are over 120 species of land snail in the UK; this one is a Garden (or common) snail. Snails travel at about one metre per hour and have a homing instinct (this means they can find their way home again if moved!). A snail's shell grows as the snail grows; the snail can never leave its shell. On its head, the snail has four tentacles. The top two tentacles have eyes at the end and the bottom two smell and taste to find food as the snail moves around.



Garden (common) snail

## Spider

Spiders are arthropods (with an exoskeleton) just like insects. However, they have eight legs, not six, and they don't move like insects do. Most spiders use a web to catch their prey. From the spinneret glands in their abdomens, spiders make silk. Spider silk is incredibly strong (as strong as the material that makes bullet-proof vests!). It usually takes spiders about an hour to build their web and they usually build a new one each day!



Garden spider (UK)

Spiders that build webs (instead of hiding and waiting for insects to pass) are called orb-weaver spiders. This video shows the UK's most common orb-weaver spider, the Garden spider. Can you see the white cross at the top of its back? It sits in the middle of the web and when it feels the vibrations of an insect struggling, it rushes out and wraps the prey in its silk. When the prey cannot move anymore, the spider bites it to kill it.

## **Worm**

Earthworms are invertebrates (without a bony skeleton) that can live up to 6 years. Their bodies are made up of segments; the first segment contains its mouth. The muscles of an earthworm are powerful and help it to move through the soil. Earthworms are really important to keep soil healthy so that plants and trees can grow, but they need to stay damp. If a worm gets too dry, it will die. Worms eat dead and decomposing matter such as leaves, roots and old apple cores. They don't have eyes, but they can sense light.



**Earthworm**