

Insects

There are more than 750 000 different kinds of insects in the world. That is twice as many as all the other animals put together. Although there are many kinds of insects they all share certain characteristics. Insects have six legs, two antennae, three body parts (head, thorax and abdomen), compound eyes and a hard outer covering called an exoskeleton. Most insects have one or two pairs of wings, however, some are wingless. These characteristics apply only to adult insects. Immature insects are so different there are no general features to help recognize them. Insects play a very important role in the natural world. They act as decomposers, food for other animals and pollinators of flowers. Their impact on nature is enormous. In addition to their roles in nature they also play a part in human society as a great benefit to people. Products such as silk, lacquer, honey and beeswax are all manufactured by insects. Insects are also used for biocontrol of agricultural and other pests and for medical research.