Royal BC Museum
675 Belleville Street
Victoria, BC V8W 9W2

Included Entomology Orders

Blattodea – Cockroaches & Termites

A group with approximately 7,000 species distributed globally. Most are detritivores, meaning that they eat dead organic matter in their ecosystem. They play a very important role in keeping nutrients cycling through the environment.

Coleoptera – Beetles

If aliens were to come down from space to learn about life on Earth, they would most likely want to get to know this group. This very large group are beetles. There are currently 400,000 described species, with more being described frequently. Beetles account for 25% of all known animal species. The beetle group is so large and varied that it's hard to find body parts that define them! However, most have elytra, which are hard, modified forewings that protect their hind wings and abdomen.

Dermaptera – Earwigs

A small group with approximately 2,000 species. Their characteristic feature is the modified cerci (paired appendages) on the back of their abdomen that has the ability to pinch.

Hemiptera – True Bugs

This group includes a variety of insects: cicadas, aphids and leafhoppers, to name a few. One of the defining features of this group is that they all feed on plants, using sucking mouthparts to extract sap.

Hymenoptera – Wasps, Bees & Ants

Hymenoptera are comprised of over 150,000 described species and are very diverse in life histories and ecological roles. Many are parasitic, using modified stingers to deposit their eggs into their host for their young to develop there. Others are eusocial, meaning they create a complex social network where large groups of individuals work together to care for offspring and divide labor. Ants, as well as some species of bees and wasps, are examples of this.

Mantodea – Praying Mantises

Praying mantises are a fascinating group that is defined by their raptorial arms, long forelimbs with spines to ensnare prey. Their head and eyes are also developed for hunting. They are predators of invertebrates.

Megaloptera – Dobson, Alder & Fishflies

This is a smaller group of about 300 species. These flying insects are known for their size, hence the name *mega*, the Greek word for "large," and *optera,* meaning "wing." The males also sport large mandibles (mouthparts) that are used in courtship.

Neuroptera – Lacewings

This group of flying insects has four delicate lace-like wings and soft bodies. In their larval form, they are predators with specialized piercing and sucking mouthparts. When they are adults, some species may keep their predatory ways while others feed on pollen or nectar.

Odonata – Dragonflies & Damselflies

Both dragonflies and damselflies are predatory flying insects with slender bodies and large, transparent wings. In their adult phase, they are excellent aerial hunters, tracking, chasing and subduing other flying insects with precision.

Orthoptera – Grasshoppers, Locusts & Crickets

This large group contains more than 20,000 species worldwide. They are defined by their elongated hind legs, which are used for jumping, and they make a sound called "stridulation" by rubbing their wings or legs together.

Trichoptera – Caddisflies

Caddisflies are best known for their aquatic larvae, which live in lakes, streams and sometimes the ocean. They produce silk to create protective cases around their bodies. Cases can also include sticks, gravel, pieces of plant matter, and bark, among other things. Caddisfly larvae can be identified to species based on the shape of the case and the type of materials incorporated.