



Coleoptera

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Seven-spotted ladybug (*Coccinella septempunctata*)

- Native to temperate Europe, North Africa, and Asia, but has been introduced to North America.
- An adult may reach a body length of 7.6-12.7 mm, the most helpful thing is that their distinctive spots and bright colours make them unappealing to predators.
- A threatened ladybug can secrete a fluid from the joints in their legs which gives them a foul smell and taste to ward off predators.
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Colorado Potato Beetle (*Leptinotarsa decemlineata*)

- This beetle is about 6-11mm long, with a bright yellow/orange body and five bold brown stripes along the length of each of its elytra.
- Native to the Rock Mountains, spread rapidly in crops across America and Europe since its a major pest of potato crops.



Lightning bugs / Fireflies (*Photuris Lucicrescens*)

- Soft bodied beetles commonly called fireflies for their ability to emit light, mainly during twilight to attract males.
- Their light production was first thought to be an early warning signal that they were distasteful, however it was later discovered that it was a mating signal in the adults.
- Female fireflies of the genus *Photuris* mimic the flash pattern of *Photinus* species to trap their males as prey.
- Found in temperate and tropical climates, many live in marshes or wet, wooded areas where they have an abundance of food sources.





Diversity + Distribution

In the order Coleoptera, there is a huge diversity, ranging over more than 400,000 species. Making it the most diverse order of insects. The insects in this order can be found all over the world in a variety of different habitats. Beetles inhabit every terrestrial and aquatic environment in the world except Antarctica. The greatest diversity of beetle species occurs in tropical regions, most tend to avoid open water because it makes them an easy target to predators, as a result they tend to live in sheltered areas for increased protection.

Reproduction

Reproduction is almost always bisexual in beetles, although some species are always parthenogenetic (which is reproducing without fertilization) and consists of females only.



Feeding ecology

Many beetles are predatory, some are scavengers, many are plant feeders. Other feed on fungi and a few are parasitic on other organisms. Beetles may live beneath the ground, in water, or in nests of social insects such as ants and termites.

Plant-feeding species may eat :

- foliage
- bore in wood or fruit
- attack root or blossoms
- any part of a plant may be a food source for some type of beetles.