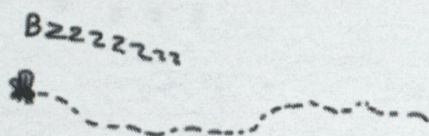
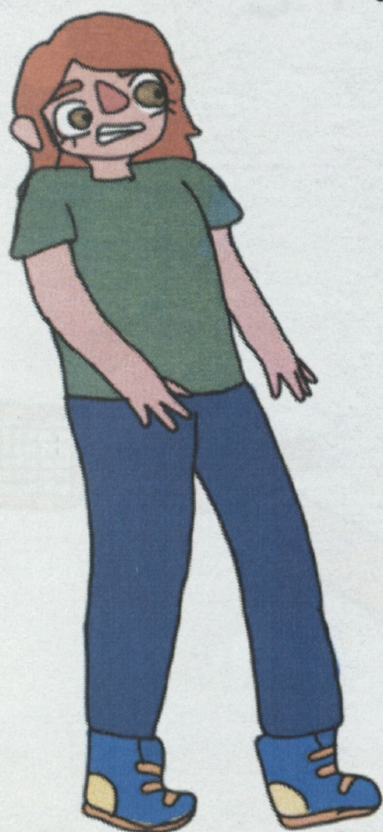
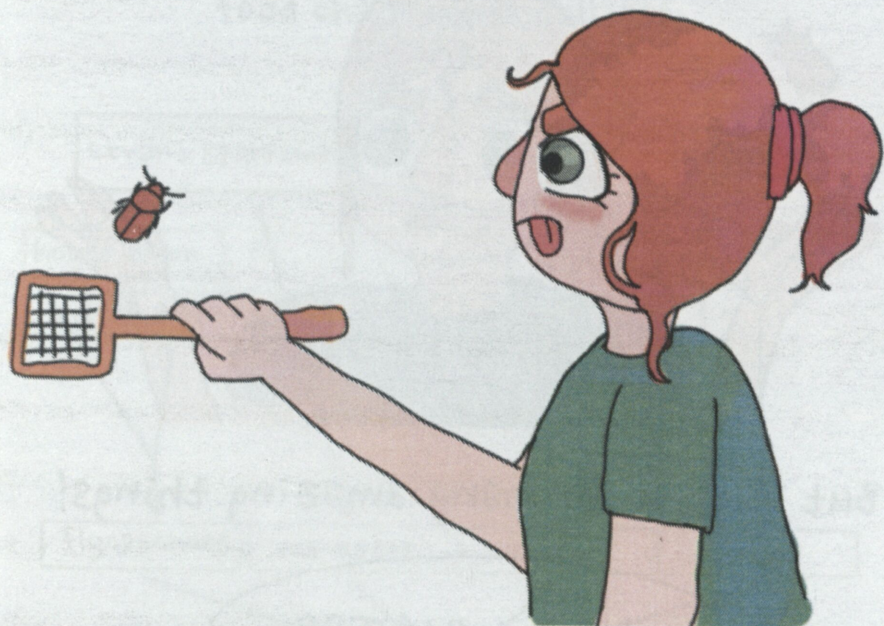


Don't Bug the Bugs



By Lavender McMillin

STOP!!!



what are you doing?!

I'm squishing the bug!

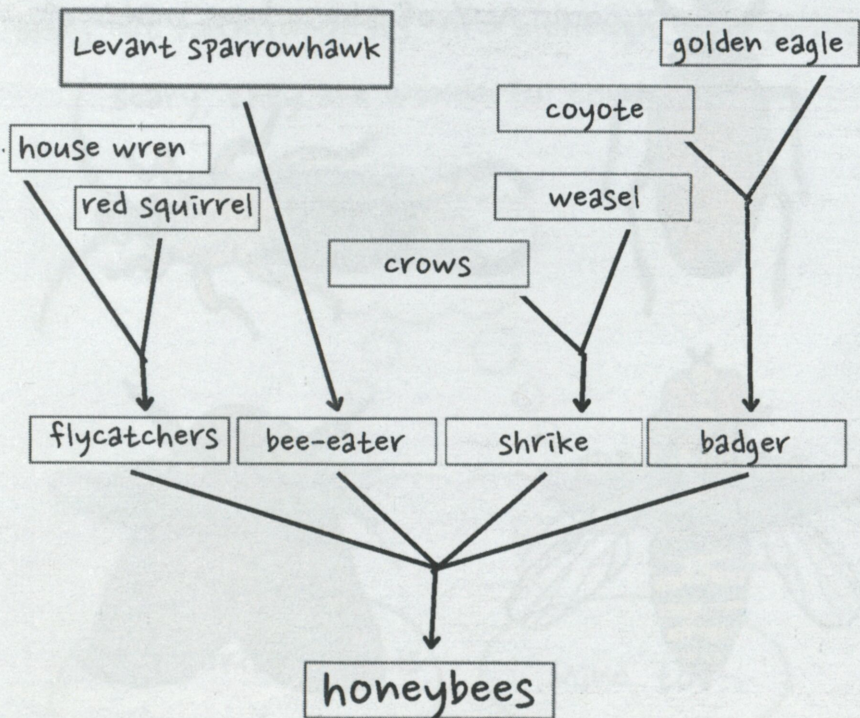


But bugs do so many amazing things!

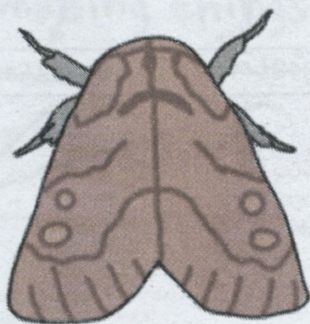
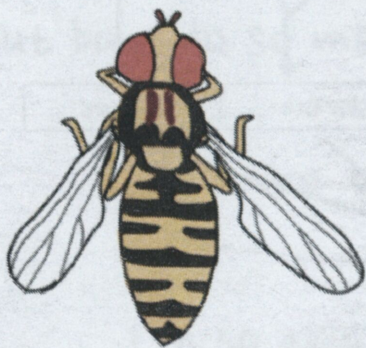
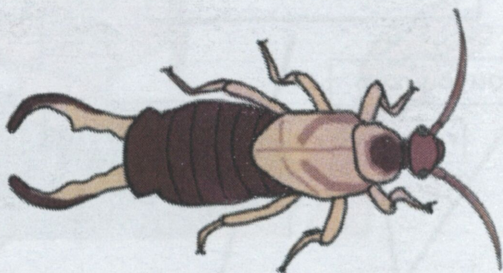
Like WHAT??

I'm so glad you asked...

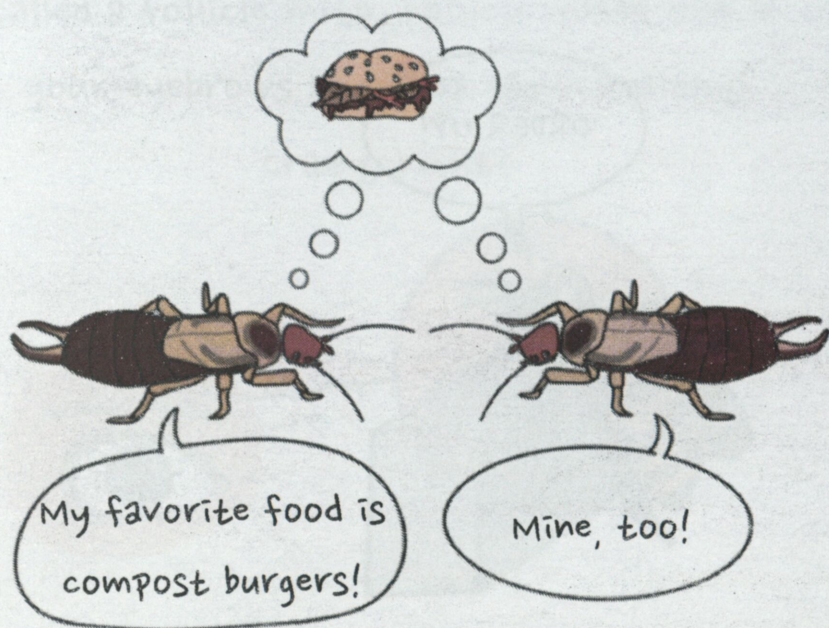
You see, if even one type of insect went extinct, (take honeybees, for example, which are endangered because of humans) the entire food chain could collapse.



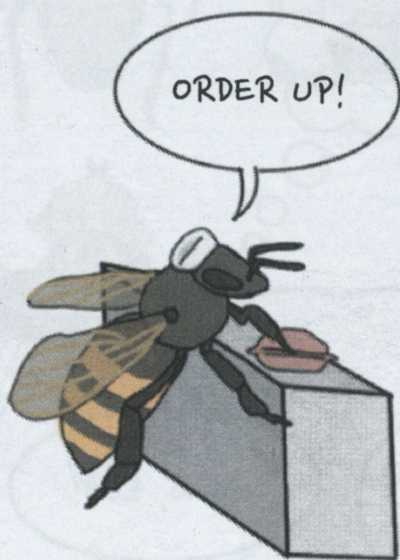
Take a look at the insects here. You see a
spike-bottomed vicious earwig, a
venomous assassin bug, a disease
ridden hover fly pretending to be a
bee, and a scary, ugly moth. How
could ANY of these bugs matter?



Easy! Although they look like stinging wasps, hover fly larvae eat garden pests and are important pollinators. Despite the majority of moths being less colorful than butterflies, they are important pollinators. Assassin bugs- in spite of their venom, they eat harmful pests. And although earwigs look scary, they are wonderful composters.



Insects make our life good. composters make it so we're not up to our waist in garbage. Bees alone account for one third of all our food. Without insects, we wouldn't even be alive. I'd say that's a pretty good reason to help them stay alive.



Symbiotic relationships are relationships between two living things in which both living things gain from the relationship. This may surprise you, but nearly every human is involved in a symbiotic relationship with an insect-like creature called a follicle mite. Follicle mites live in your eyebrows and keep them healthy! crazy, right?

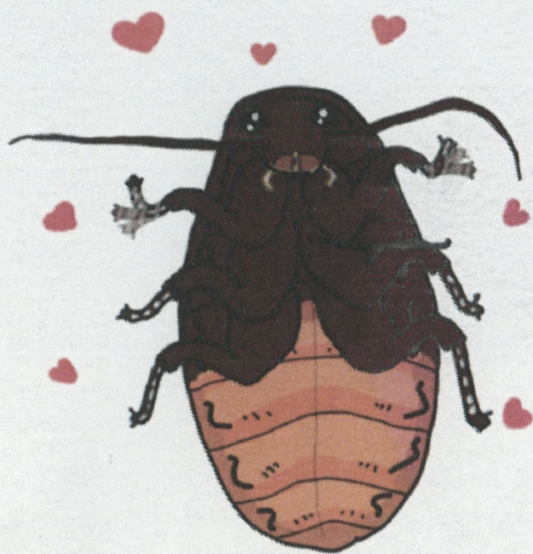




Now I've spent a lot of time telling you why bugs are important and why you should help them. But what CAN you do to help? Well, simply appreciating them and not squishing them is a great start. Planting pollinator-friendly plants like sunflowers, lavenders, coneflowers, crocus, and cosmos, is definitely amazing. It is good to turn out your lights early or blocking the light so moths can't see it from outside. (This is helpful because some nocturnal bugs use the moon and stars to navigate and get confused by lights from your house.) You can also donate to insect charities such as the Xerces Society to help. And remember to keep an open mind.



You don't have to like bugs, but with all they do for the planet, it can't hurt to help them out a little.



Anyways, thank you for reading this! I hope you learned something and were inspired to help out these wondrous creatures!

