

Štěpánka Sekaninová  Zuzana Dreadka Krutá

The World of Insect from butterflies to crickets



# The World of INSECT

from butterflies  
to crickets



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## Wonderful flyers

Dragonflies have inhabited our planet for over 330 million years and have always been excellent flyers. They can fly many kilometers. Some species migrate around the world.



Ha! I see you.  
Tough luck!



I'm not resting. I'm  
lying in wait!



I may look harmless, but I'm  
dangerous.

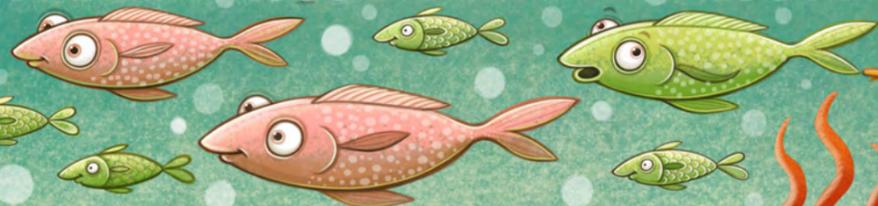


Dragonfly - adult

## Born to hunt

Like their parents, dragonfly young are feared hunters. Dragonfly nymphs (naiads) develop in water, where they hunt tadpoles and small fish.

Got you! I'm just  
as good as my  
parents.



Dragonfly - nymph

# Predatory beauties

A thing of beauty hovers above the water. Reminiscent of a precious gemstone, it is actually a dragonfly. Be cautious around this little creature – it is a true predator! No sooner has it spotted its victim than it goes after it. It may change direction a hundred times without allowing anyone or anything to distract it. It will catch and swallow the unfortunate prey right there in the air. It always achieves its aim. And no wonder! Dragonflies have strong, sturdy wings. And those eyes! Made up of a thousand tiny units, they are huge. Nothing escapes a dragonfly, not least as it can turn its head. It doesn't matter that its senses of smell and touch aren't that good.

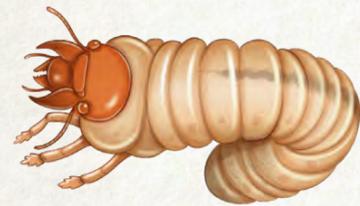
# Mole cricket

Hush-a-bye-babies, sings the mole cricket to its little eggs, which are lying in the hole it has dug for them. Or maybe it sings a different song. A good parent, it guards its future offspring with great care. Only after the hatching of translucent little nymphs does it leave them and disappear underground. Mole crickets thrive in soil – ideally in damp soil near a pond or a watered flowerbed. The unobtrusive mole cricket has a feeling for music. Imagine that! Males attract a beloved by performing in chambers that function like concert halls. The contest is won by the cricket with the best musical ear. Naturally.

Using protuberances on our abdomen, we can move backwards in our underground tunnels.



Mole cricket – adult



Mole cricket – nymph

## Superheroes

As well as being able to dig long tunnels underground, mole crickets are good flyers and excellent swimmers.



Leave that root alone!

Shh, shh ... sleep tight, little ones.

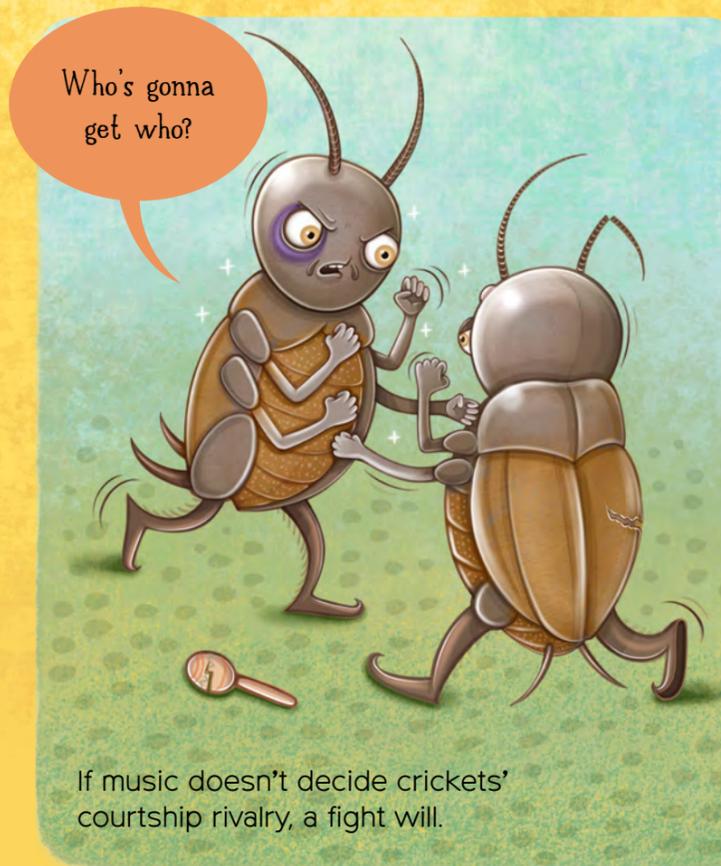
Hey, a snack!

# A musician in love

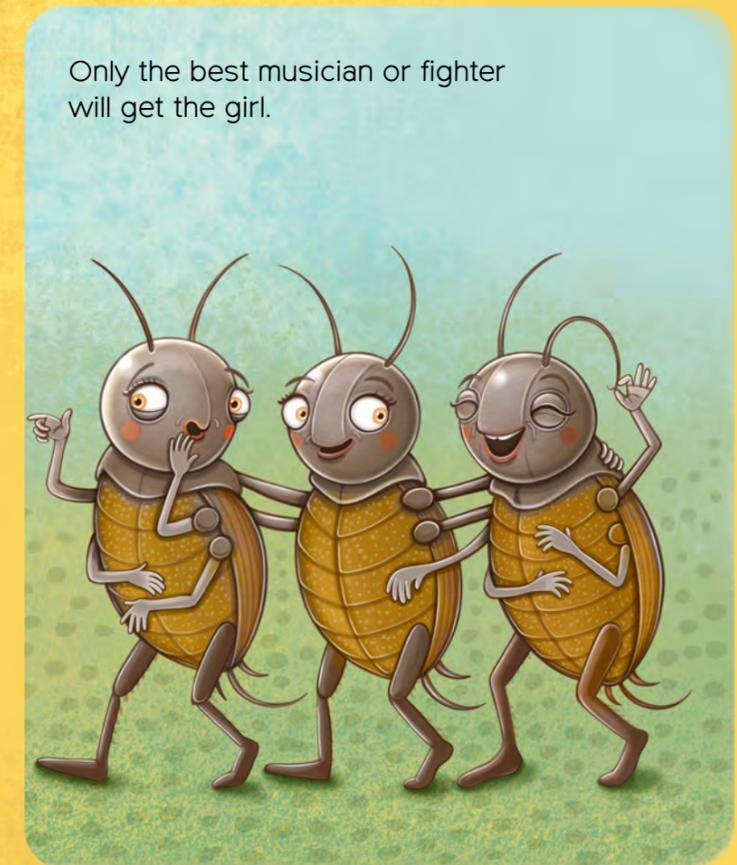
O sole mio ... O sole mio ... A cricket sits by its burrow, singing till his ears ring. He is trying to attract a wife. If only the other would get out of his way! He, too, is singing to his chosen one as if his life depended on it. It seems that one of the girls has fallen in love. What now? Well, she will lay hundreds of eggs in her husband's burrow. From these, small crickets will hatch as nymphs. These will spend the whole winter underground. In spring, young crickets will jump from the burrows. The boys will begin their music-making, and the girls will choose a mate ...



Cricket boys attract cricket girls with their music.

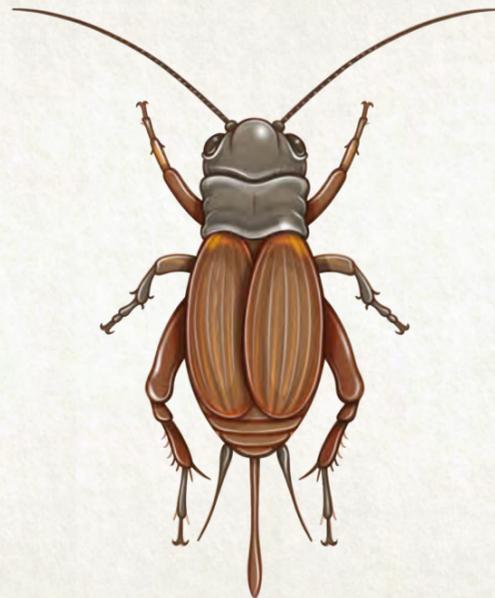


If music doesn't decide crickets' courtship rivalry, a fight will.



Only the best musician or fighter will get the girl.

We female crickets can't make music.

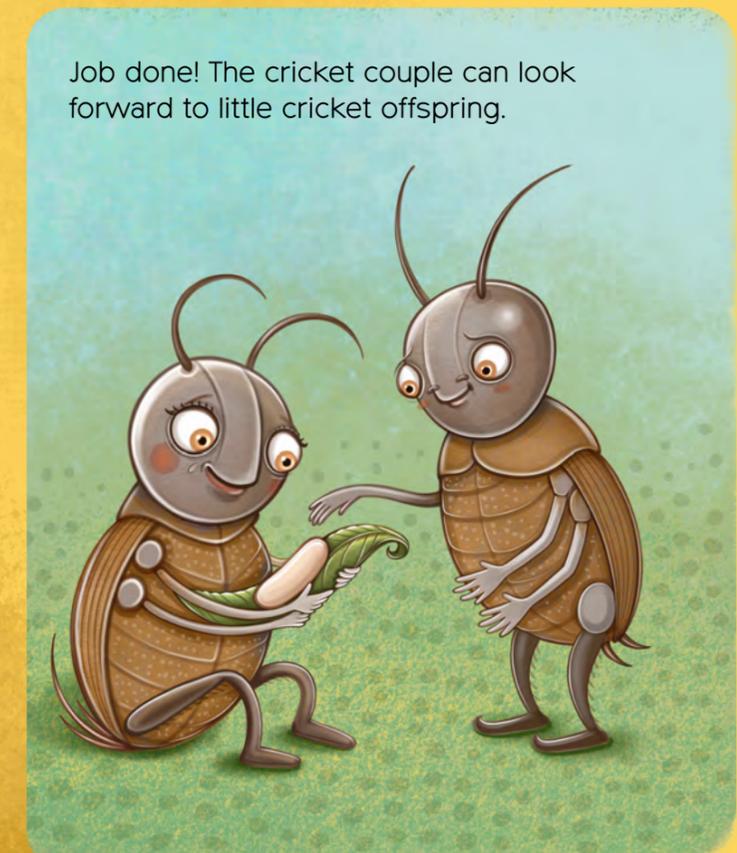


Field cricket - female

Do you know where our hearing organ is? On our front legs. We make our music by rubbing our wings.



Field cricket - male

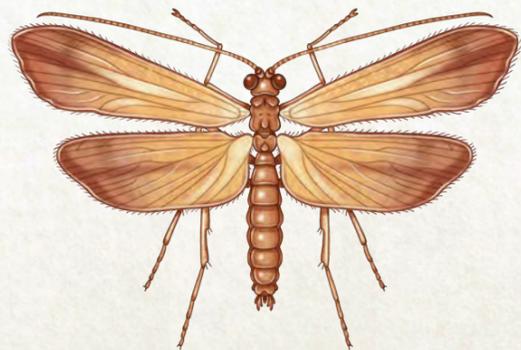


Job done! The cricket couple can look forward to little cricket offspring.

# Pebble-lovers

What's that moving on the riverbed? Tubes made of pebbles, shells, or twigs? Has the riverbed come to life? Of course not! What you are looking at is caddisfly larvae. Fragile, they have to protect themselves somehow against the local trout, who would like to have them for breakfast! Fish have no interest in pebbles or shells. But the larvae want to see the world, the world their parents know ... Have wings to carry them high above the river ... Find a partner on a summer evening, and lay, under the surface, eggs from which other caddisflies will grow ... Well, all this will be there for them on the day they leave their little houses of pebbles, sticks, shells, and sand.

Our wings are covered with fine hair.



Caddisfly

## Don't get seen!

Adult caddisflies are very hard to spot in daytime. This allows them to hide from hungry enemies. Mostly, they emerge from their hiding places only in the evening.



I'm not actually here ...



Will I fit in here?



Hey, treasure!



This will come in handy!



Look what I found!



Oh! I have a stone just like yours!

## Building materials

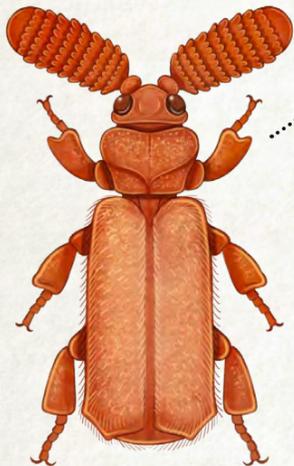
Caddisfly larvae will make a house out of anything! Take a bead or a gemstone from a ring that has ended up on the riverbed – both are perfectly good materials.



# Friend of the ants

What am I doing in an anthill? I wander in corridors, peer into chambers, and when I happen across an ant larva or a fresh ant egg, I gobble it up. Then I take a nap someplace quiet. From time to time I sneak up on the queen for a chat. Ant beetles and ants get along. The beetles' splendid antennae secrete a substance that is pleasant to ants, who take good care of their guests. When a beetle lays eggs in their nest, the ants take care of them as if they were their own, so hatching another batch of guests. Everyone is happy, which is surely the most important thing!

I live in coniferous and mixed forests all across Europe!

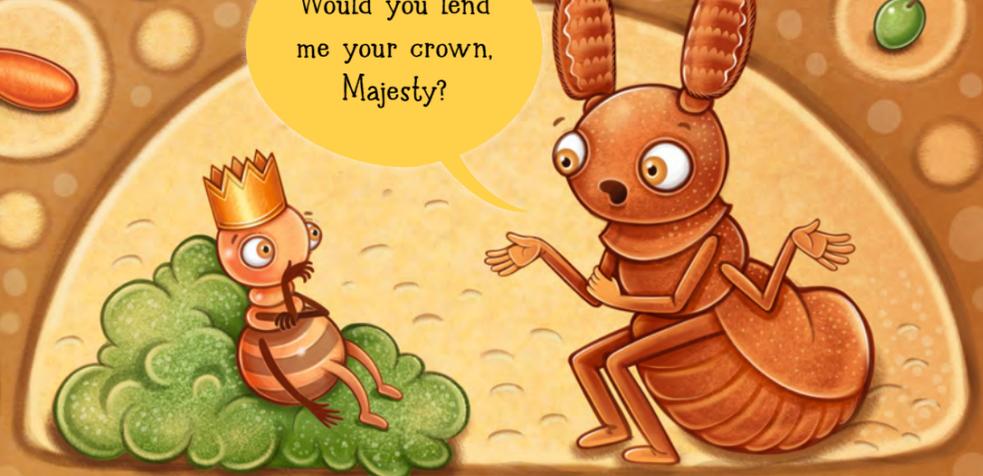


adult



Ant beetle

larva



Would you lend me your crown, Majesty?



I'm winning!



# Butterfly traveler

Time to pack, boys and girls! Fall is here, and with it our vacation in Mexico. Prepare well: We have a flight of three months ahead. We massage our wings and set off. Travel fever? We're anything but faint-hearted. We have adventurers' blood in our veins. We fly in such great numbers that we are afraid of nothing. We cover the entire sky. And how beautiful we are! Our coloring shows us to be warriors. Everyone knows right away that we are poisonous. This is so because our caterpillars feed on poisonous plants. No one comes after us – except for black-eared mice; we must beware of them. Anyway, enough talk! Time to go. See you in Mexico!

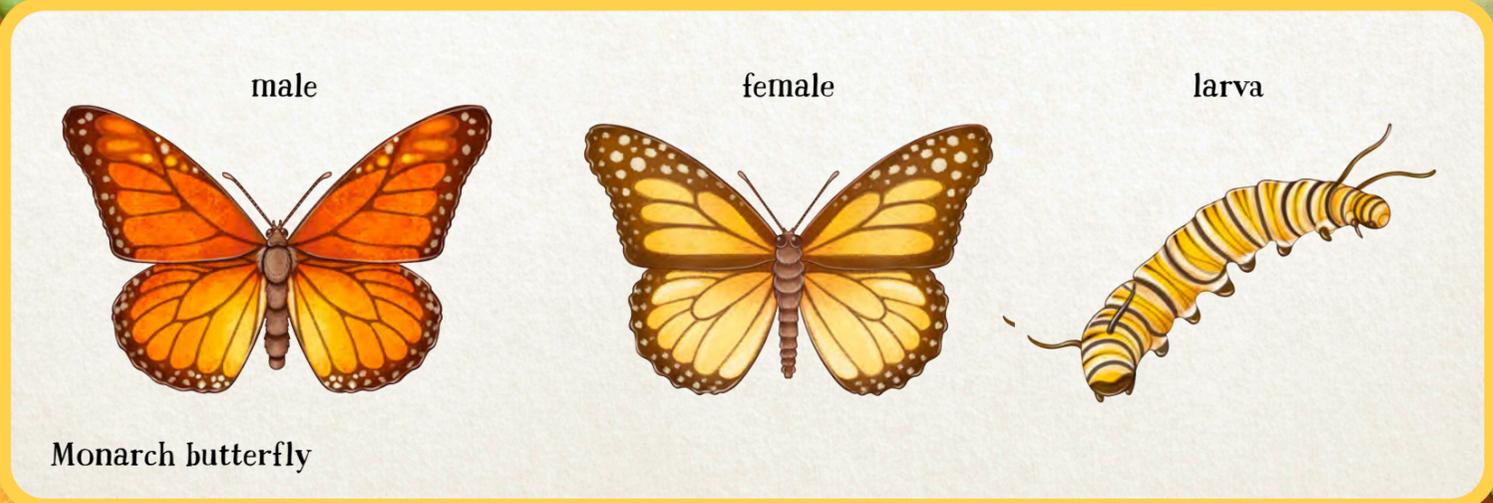


Watch out, I'm poisonous!

You may be poisonous, but I'll eat you. My stomach can take it.

Is that enough, or should I keep massaging?

Should I take a lucky charm?



male

female

larva

Monarch butterfly

**Kilometers in their wings**  
 These amazing butterflies can travel up to 100km in a single day. They must do this to make the journey from southern Canada to Mexico.

# A mayfly's life

Do not disturb! Lady mayflies, their abdomen in the water, are laying their eggs. Click, click, click ... and the eggs stick to plants or rocks on the bottom. While the adults live for just a few hours, their young live much longer: The naiads that hatch from the eggs might spend several years in an aquatic environment. When the time comes, a whole clutch of mayfly larvae will emerge on land, where they will become adults. From then on, the aim of their existence will be to reproduce as quickly as possible.

## No food

Adult mayflies really do live very short lives. This may explain why they cannot eat and live on reserves they built up as larvae or naiads.

How many eggs have we actually laid?

Are you looking forward to your wings too?

In a few years I'll be an adult.

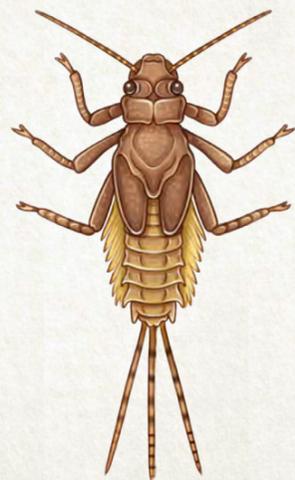
What's it like on land?

Munch, munch. I love algae.

We have been around for over 300 million years.



Mayfly - adult



Mayfly - naiad



Insects are insects, you might be thinking. But believe me, no two insects are the same. The world has more of them than any other animal, each one a little different. There are colorful ones and inconspicuous ones, noisy ones and quiet ones. There are plant-like ones, and there are born musicians. In this book, we take a look at lesser-known inhabitants of the insect kingdom and their remarkable lives. We discover which skates on ponds, and which lives on the riverbed. We learn about ingenious traps insects set, how they build houses out of stones, and how greedy some of them can be. The world of insects is more than colorful. If you don't believe us, come and join us – buzz-zz-zz – in a world where there's always something going on.

*Welcome to the world of Insec!*



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