

Identifying Insects

Name: Date:

Use this dichotomous key to identify some common garden insects.

1) Does it have visible wings?

Yes - Go to Question 2 No - Go to Question 3

2) How many pairs of wings?

1 pair - Diptera (Flies, Mosquitoes) 2 pairs - Go to question 7

3) Does it have a large hip joint and a flat body?

Yes - Siphonaptera (Flea) No - Go to question 4

4) Does it have three or more tails at the end of the abdomen?

Yes - Thysanura (Silverfish) No - Go to question 5

5) Does it have a thin waist and bent antennae?

Yes - Hymenoptera (Ant) No - Go to Question 6

6) Is its body shaped like a stick?

Yes - Phasmatodea (Stick Insect) No - Go to Question 7

7) Does it have a hidden pair of wings?

Yes - Go to Question 8 No - Go to Question 14

8) Does it have a set of hard outer wings ?

Yes - Go to question 9 No - Go to question 10

9) Does it have pinchers on its abdomen?

Yes - Dermaptera (Earwigs) No - Coleoptera (Beetles)

10) Is the body oval and flattened?

Yes - Blattodea (Cockroaches) No - Go to question 11

11) Does it have long hind legs used for jumping?

Yes - Go to question 12 No - Go to question 15

12) Does it have a flat sided head?

Yes - Orthoptera (Grasshoppers, crickets) No - Go to question 13

13) Does it have an extremely long neck region?

Yes - Go to question 14 No - Go to question 15

14) Does it hold its forelegs in a 'praying' position ?

Yes - Mantids (Praying Mantis) No - Raphidioptera (Snakefly)

15) Are both sets of wings about the same size?

Yes - Go to question 16 No - Go to question 18

16) Are its wings membranous?

Yes - Go to question 17 No - Go to question 19

17) Does it have compound eyes that take up almost all of its head?

Yes - Odonata (Dragonflies) No - Go to question 18

18) Are the forewings membranous and hardened at the base?

Yes - Hemiptera (Cicadas, aphids, true bugs) No - Go to question 19

19) Are the wings covered in scales?

Yes - Lepidoptera (Butterflies, moths) No - Go to question 20

20) Does it have an oval shaped abdomen and a thin waist?

Yes - Hymenoptera (Bees, wasps) No - Embioptera (Web spinners)