



QUAD CITY
BOTANICAL
CENTER

Common Insects Seen at the QCBC

A Field Guide to Insects You
May Encounter

By: Kirsten Biefeld

My Name Is...

Information gathered from
insectidentification.org, a
great source to identify any
insect you catch and learn
more about them!



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Bees, Wasps and Ants

Most common species of Hymenoptera include bees, wasps and ants. There is a usually distinct triangle-shaped head and a thin waist. Stingers are a specialized ovipositor, or egg laying organ, meaning only females can sting.

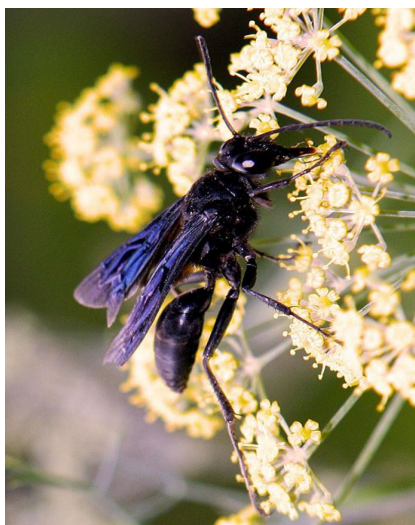


Common Eastern Bumble Bee *Bombus impatiens*

Order: Hymenoptera

ID: Large fuzzy bee with a bald spot in the center and a single yellow band near waist.

Facts: Native species. They are efficient pollinators, with pollen baskets on their back legs. Very docile unless provoked.



Great Black Wasp *Sphex pensylvanicus*

Order: Hymenoptera

ID: Completely black wasp with a skinny waist

Facts: Though they are mean looking, they do not bother humans, but will sting if mishandled. Adults feed on nectar and pollen, while their larva feed on crickets and keep grasshopper populations in check, making them a friend to gardens.

A large, empty rounded rectangle with a black border, intended for handwritten notes about the insect.

Date:

What insect is this?

What did you see it doing?

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Little Black Ant

Monomorium minimum

Order: Hymenoptera

ID: A very small black ant with brown legs.

Facts: one of few ant species with winged queens. Workers prey on insects that feed on honeydew that is produced by aphids.

Beetles and Bugs

In general, they tend to have a more squat, rounded body with a small head and a large abdomen. Beetles (Coleoptera) have a hard shell-like wing coverings, while bugs (Hemiptera) do not, which tend to have a shield-shaped body.



Asian Multicolored Lady Beetle *Harmonia axyridis*

Order: Coleoptera

ID: circular insect with a black and white head and spots on back that can range from yellow to red coloration

Facts: Used to be praised for eating aphids and other agricultural plants, this Asian species is now outcompeting native species. They also release a pungent odor.



Japanese Beetle

Popillia japonica

Order: Coleoptera

ID: Small beetle that is a metallic green with brown wing coverings and small white tufts of hair on sides.

Facts: They are invasive, brought from Japan in the 1900s. They are known for their destructive properties on flowers like roses.



Milkweed Beetle *Tetraopes tetrophthalmus*

Order: Coleoptera

ID: Long red insect with black spots and legs

Facts: Feed upon the Milkweed plant and are thought to gain toxicity from the leaves. Nicknamed the “Longhorn beetle”, its long antenna actually bisects the eye.



Oleander Aphid *Aphis nerii*

Order: Hemiptera

ID: Very small yellow bugs with black legs.

Facts: They are parthenogenetic and viviparous, meaning all adults are female and reproduce asexually, and do not lay eggs, but nymphs. Adults can have wings though not all do.. They feed on the honeydew of a plant, but plants produce a lot of sap

Date:

What insect is this?

What did you see it doing?

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What did you see it doing?

Create your own field guide!

Draw what you saw in our gardens and what you saw them doing. Be sure to date when you saw it, like a scientist!

Date:

What insect is this?

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Date:

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What did you see it doing?

Butterflies and Moths

Insects in the order Lepidoptera that have thin bodies and large, scaly wings. Butterflies tend to have thin antennas with dots at the end, and Moths with hairier, thicker bodies and fuzzy antennas



Black Swallowtail *Papilio polyxenes*

Order: Lepidoptera

ID: Large with black wings and yellow spots along the edges. There is blue at the base of the wings, with the female (top picture) showing much more than the male (bottom picture).

Facts: They are said to be mimicking their poisonous cousin, the pipevine swallowtail. Caterpillars feed on plants in the carrot family.



Cabbage Butterfly *Pieris rapae*

Order: Lepidoptera

ID: A small white butterfly with black edges and spots on wings.

Facts: An introduced species, originally from Europe, N. Africa and Asia. The caterpillars eat cabbage leaves, but the adults like flower nectar.

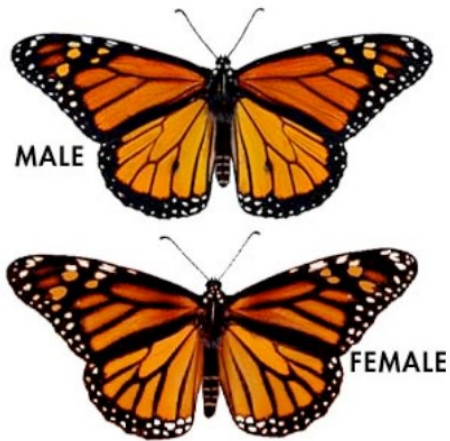


Hummingbird clearwing moth *Hemaris Thysbe*

Order: Lepidoptera

ID: Red laced wings with an olive green body and males have a red, flared out tail

Facts: They are hummingbird mimics. If you listen closely, you can hear their wings make a soft buzzing sound.

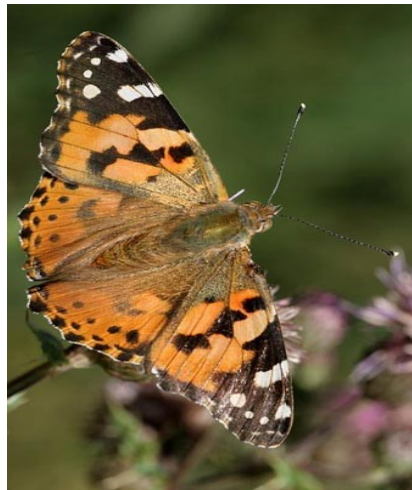


Monarch Butterfly *Danaus plexippus*

Order: Lepidoptera

ID: Orange/yellow and black butterfly with wingspan of 3-4 inches.

Facts: Can only lay eggs on milkweed plants, which it's caterpillars feed upon and gain its poisonous properties from. Has a multigenerational migration to Mexico and back each winter.



Painted Lady *Vanessa cardui*

Order: Lepidoptera

ID: Orange/yellow and black butterfly with white dots.

Facts: Their caterpillars eat Thistle, Mallow and Hollyhock. They are found on every continent except for Antarctica and Australia.

Dragonflies and Damselflies

Of the order Odonata, these insects have very long abdomens and large front eyes. Dragonflies are larger and their wings are always straight out from their sides, while damselflies hold them above their bodies.



Sussezwildlifetrust.org.uk

Emperor Dragonfly *Anax imperator*

Order: Odonata

ID: Large dragonfly with green coloring near head and blue on the tail

Facts: They can dive in the air at speeds up to 24mph. Their young, called nymphs, take up to a year to become adults, but then only live for 10 days.



Blue-fronted Dancer *Agria apicalis*

Order: Odonata

ID: Small, thin bodied insect with a blue head and thorax.

Facts: As juveniles, they live in the water and breath through gills. They keep smaller insect populations in check, and males are territorial and protect their areas from other males.