



**Baltimore Woods
Nature Center**
Nature in your hands

Insects and You!

Insects are the most diverse group of animals. They inhabit almost every continent and take on a huge variety of ecosystem roles. Insects pollinate flowers, consume other insects, aid in decomposition and the cycling of nutrients, and provide a food source for many bird and mammal species. Humans rely heavily on insects for food production, medicine, and they are a staple food group in numerous countries. In fact, insects are an incredibly important source of nutrients, can be used in a variety of ways, and are one of the most sustainable food options.

Adding insects to your diet is relatively easy, getting over your fear of trying them is most definitely not. To make it easier on yourself, order ready-to-eat insects online in the form of protein powders, flours, and crunchy snacks. As you grow to love them, start growing your own insects to eat such as crickets or mealworms. This is a big step for many people, but it is an important one. Be patient with yourself and your family and take small steps. Read for yourself the benefits of eating insects for your own health and the environment:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/09/07/t-magazine/eating-bugs-food-restaurant.html>

If eating bugs seems a bit too much for you, don't worry! You can still help the environment, and insects, by providing habitat. Insects rely on plants for food, water, shelter, and reproduction. Learn how to fill your garden with insect friendly plants here:

https://www.bbg.org/gardening/article/make_your_garden_a_haven_for_insect_diversity

Send us pictures of your insect food adventures or your favorite insect visitors to your garden on social media or email us at connect@baltimorewoods.org!