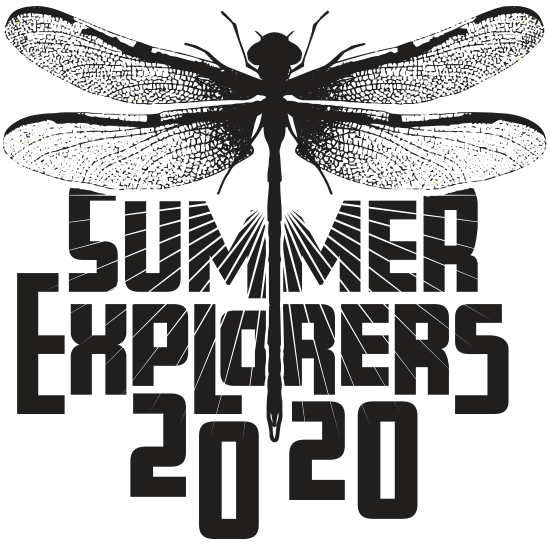

SUMMER EXPLORERS 2020

WEEK 1: CREEPY CRAWLIES

ARE YOU READY FOR SOME CREEPY CRAWLY FUN?

An insect is a type of animal that has six legs, three body parts (head, thorax, abdomen), compound eyes, two antennae and an exoskeleton (a hard covering on the outside of its body). Most adult insects also have wings, though they might be hidden or very small. Can you think of any insects you have seen? Common insects include grasshoppers, flies, beetles, ants and butterflies. Insects are among the most numerous and diverse animals on Earth!

DAY 2: ANT PICNIC

Insects like to eat many different things. Some like nectar from flowers while others like grasses or even other insects. Ants are a type of insect with over 10,000 different species in the world. They are omnivores, meaning they will eat both plants and animals. However, different types of ants prefer different types of food. Some ants, such as carpenter ants, like sugary foods or other insects. Pharaoh ants like sugary and fatty foods and like to move between several different foods instead of feeding on one for a longer time. You can see what ants in your area like to eat by leaving some foods outside for them to try.

Before you start, you should have:

- Sugar
- A vegetable (baby carrot, lettuce leaf or other)
- One slice of bread
- A timer or watch
- A place outside with ants (make sure you pick somewhere away from buildings or spaces you do not want to attract ants to)

Get started:

1. Gather the food and go outside.
2. Find a spot with ants. (Look for an anthill or line of ants on the ground.)
3. Place the bread, vegetable and sugar on the ground near the ants, at least a few inches apart. Which food do you think the ants will like best?
4. Observe the ants for five minutes. Do they start to go to one kind of food more than the others?
5. Observe the ants after 15 minutes. What are the ants doing? Are there more ants gathering one kind of food more than the others? Why do you think that is?
6. Observe the ants after 30 minutes. Are there more ants gathering one kind of food more than the others? Have they switched to a different food?
7. When you have finished with the experiment, leave the food on the ground until the ants have gone.
8. If any of the food remains on the ground, gently shake off any ants then dispose of the food.
9. Tell someone what you discovered!

- What kind of food did the ants like best?
- What did you observe the ants doing at each type of food?
- Why do you think the ants liked one kind of food over another?

Keep Exploring!

- Try the experiment again with different foods. You can use fruit, cheese, coffee grounds, or any other food you have. Is there one kind of food the ants like more often (grains, sweet things, vegetables, etc.)?
- Try the experiment at different places or with different types of ants

What did you find?

Upload a photo or video and tag the Sam Noble Museum on Instagram or Facebook. You can also use the hashtags **#samnoblehome** and **#summerexplorers** to share!

More information on ants:

https://www.nationalgeographic.com/animals/invertebrates/group/ants/

https://extension.umn.edu/insects-infest-homes/ants

Join Sam Noble Museum educators as they head outside to try the Ant Picnic experiment!

https://youtu.be/PKm_BWxlCJ0