

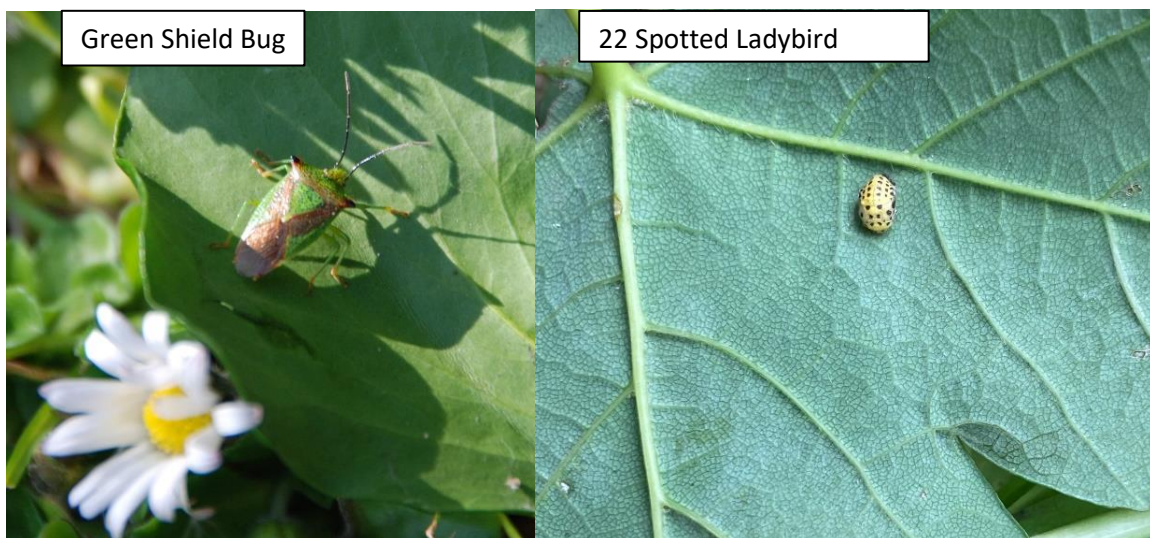
## June- Insects and Invertebrates

As we get into the real summer months, it is a great time to look for insects and other invertebrates. It can be easy to be confused these two words. An invertebrate is an animal without a backbone or spine. They are generally small and this group includes the insects, arachnids and much more. An insect usually has six legs and three body parts. Many of the creatures we call insects are invertebrates but not insects. For example: Spiders, woodlice, centipedes, snails and worms are not insects! Let's look at a few different examples of invertebrates you might be less familiar with!

### Flying Invertebrates- Ladybirds and Shield Bugs

There are huge numbers of different species of insects. In fact, most animals on earth are insects! That means there are lots to notice and identify! We often just think of Ladybirds as being the 7 spot ladybird, which is red with 7 black spots but in fact we have 19 different types in Ireland. These have different numbers of spots and even different colours! See them all [here](#).

Shield bugs are a group of insects you might be less familiar with but they live all over Ireland and we have 18 different types in a variety of colours! They can be hard to spot as although they are found in hedgerows and trees around us, they tend to feed on leaves which they can camouflage with! Take a look at the patterns and colours of the Shield Bugs [here](#).



**Learn more:** Insects grow from young to old in a much different way to many other animals. You might be familiar with the journey of a caterpillar to a butterfly but do you know how a ladybird grows and changes? Discover their life cycle in this short video [https://youtu.be/ws\\_D5nXOAJg](https://youtu.be/ws_D5nXOAJg)

**Get outside:** Head out to your school grounds or local park and see what flying invertebrates you can find. Check out this [demonstration video](#) to get some ideas on how to find a nice variety! You can find some spotter sheets linked on page 4 in this [document](#).

## Crawling Invertebrates- Woodlouse, Spiders and More!



Woodlice are not insects. They actually belong in the crustacean group!



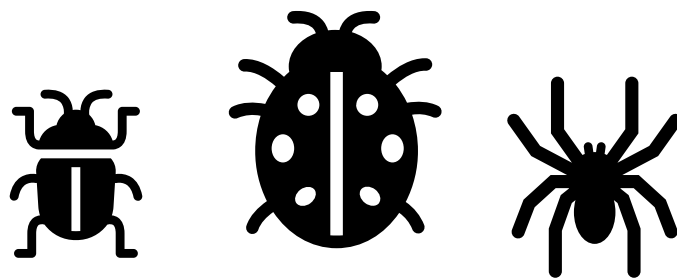
Centipede's are not insects either! They are arthropods. They have lots of legs- although not always 100 like the name suggests!

Many of the small creatures we find under logs and pots that we call insects belong to different groups. You may know that spiders are not insects, they are arachnids! They have eight legs and two body parts. There are more than 390 different types of spiders in Ireland! It can be difficult to tell them all apart from each other! Spiders are a very important part of any ecosystem. They feed on a huge variety of small creatures and are also eaten by lots of different animals.

Woodlice are another large group of invertebrates. Again they are not insects but actually crustaceans. This is the group of animals that includes lobsters and crabs! Woodlice have 14 legs! We have 32 different species in Ireland. You might be familiar with the Pill Bug or "Roly Poly" which curls into a ball when its scared

**Activity 1:** Learn more about Irish Spiders with this [free online course](#) with the National Biodiversity Data Centre.

**Activity 2:** Investigate life under logs, rocks, pots, piles of leaves etc. and try to identify what you find. Watch this [demonstration video](#) to get some ideas and use the spotter sheets linked page 4 in this [document](#).



Best of luck this month!