



Nature Tots

At Home

**Garden
Minibeasts**

Storytime suggestion

'Twist and Hop Minibeast Bop' by Tony Mitton and Guy Parker-Rees.

If you don't have the book, listen to it read aloud [here](#) under the 'Garden Minibeast' section.

Become a mini beast explorer

You don't need to have any special equipment to become a minibeast explorer, but if you have any of the following items they might help you to get closer and see in more detail:

- Bug pots for holding your minibeasts— you can also use plastic tubs from the recycling.
- A small spoon or paintbrush for gently scooping up minibeasts.
- A magnifying glass for looking at creatures in detail.
- A piece of white paper or pale coloured pillow case for exploring trees and bushes.

Once you have your explorer kit head out into the garden or local green area, Minibeasts live in lots of different places (habitats). Try to track down the following:

Woodlice and Millipedes— These like dark, damp places so look under large stones, logs or plant pots.

Beetles and spiders— Delve into the cracks in tree bark and look under dead wood to find these.

Ants—Carefully look between the blades of grass to see if you can find any ants.





Caterpillars and ladybirds— lay your paper or pillowcase under a tree or bush and gently shake the branches to see if any of these fall out.

Slugs, snails and worms— go out after it rains and see if you can spot any or look in the cracks in walls and under stones.

How many of the creatures from Minibeast Bop can you find?



Ant



Slug



Worm



Beetle



Snail



Ladybird

Ant by Ben Davis, Beetle by Yu Luck, Worm by Sergey Tikhonov, Ladybird by Vectors Print, Slug by parkysun, Snail by Alex Muraven from the Noun Project

When you finish looking at your minibeasts be sure to put them back somewhere they will be safe. Try and put them back into the same sort of place that you found them so that they have everything they need to stay happy and alive.

Minibeast counting

When you have your minibeasts in your tray or pot, practice your counting. How many legs does each different type of minibeast have? Do they all have the same number of legs or are they different?

Counting the number of legs is a great way to check if you have correctly identified your minibeast find. If any have the same number of legs, see if you can spot any other similarities they may have. How do they all move, especially those without legs?





Create a minibeast from junk

Once you have looked at different minibeasts why not create your own? Raid the recycling to find pots, egg cartons and cardboard boxes and and hunt outside for sticks and leaves. Then let your imagination run wild!

Think about where your minibeast will live– will it have a shell or a hard case to protect it? Will it have legs? If so, how many? Will it be camouflaged or brightly coloured

Make a bug hotel

You can make a really simple bug hotel by gathering together natural materials that have a hollow in them such as canes or dried wild flower stems. Cut them into short lengths and then wrap them with a few leaves before tying the bundle with string. Hang your bug hotel in bushes or low down in trees or place it into a cosy corner of your garden.

If you would like to create a bug mansion we have activity sheets to show you how [here](#) and [here](#).

Create a creature cafe

Using a plastic tray or old paper or plastic plate, find somewhere sheltered (away from the birds) such as under a bush and leave out some slices of cucumber, lettuce leaves and fruit. Keep checking back to see if anyone has visited your café. What foods are favourite? Can you think of any others to try?

