

SCIENCE

FROM HOME



Bug Camouflage Scavenger Hunt

One way that bugs can protect themselves is to use camouflage to hide themselves in plain sight! Some bug bodies are made to look like other things like other animals and plants! Let's go on a scavenger hunt! Look for the things below to see what bugs might blend in with! You don't need to take the items out of nature — take a picture to “collect” them instead!

Know before you begin

- This activity should be done outside
- Adult supervision is recommended
- Please choose a safe space for this activity

Things to Find!

Green Leaves

Many kinds of bugs look like green leaves! One is the Common True Katydid (*Pterophylla camellifolia*). The sides of their bodies look like green leaves, allowing them to blend in on trees! Be sure to be careful to not touch any leaves, no one wants to get poison ivy!

Dead Leaves

Some bugs, like the Dead Leaf Mantis (*Deroplatys desiccata*), blend in with dead leaves around them. When they are disturbed, they will sway back and forth to imitate a leaf in the wind, or they will play dead!

Sticks

There are some bugs, like the Vietnamese (Annam) Walking Sticks (*Medauroidea extradentata*), that blend in by looking like sticks. When they move, they look like twigs moving in the wind. They will also shed limbs to avoid predators and will grow the limbs back during metamorphosis — then they might look like broken branches!



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Flowers

The Orchid Mantis (*Hymenopus coronatus*) looks like an orchid flower. They sit near flowers, sometimes on leaves or stems, and wait for other bugs to fly by. Then they catch their prey and eat it!

Sand

The Mottled Sand Grasshopper (*Spharagemon collare*) blends in with the sandy environment that makes up its home. It lives among the grassy part of sand dunes, which makes this type of camouflage perfect!

Thorns

The Thorn Bug (*Umbonia crassicornis*) looks like a thorn! Sometimes enough thorn bugs can gather on a plant, so it looks like the plant is covered in thorns!

Tree Bark

The Peppered Moth (*Biston betularia*) has white and black wings that are speckled in order to blend in with tree bark. These moths are famous for showing that insects will sometimes change their appearance based on the environment — pollution made the trees where they lived darker, and the moths started getting dark and darker coloring to blend in!

References

[Common true katydid](#)

[Unraveling the Orchid Mantis Mystery](#)

[Grasshoppers of Wyoming and the West](#)

[Thorn Bug](#)

[Peppered Moths](#)



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