

What's Buzzin' in Your Backyard?

Starting each spring, people around Missoula and across Montana send pictures of cool bugs they have found to our team at the Missoula Butterfly House & Insectarium. Each week, we identify them and share fun facts about them in a report called *What's Buzzin'*. We hope you enjoy these activities that have been inspired by *What's Buzzin'* and get a chance to get out and search for bugs of your very own!

Match Those Bugs! Read the descriptions on the left and look at the pictures on the right. Can you tell which description belongs with which picture? Draw a line between the description and the picture to connect the right ones. Then, flip over this page to learn how to find bugs like these in your own backyard!

A I am a fast runner with great vision. I do not build webs. Instead, I hunt for insects on plants during the day. I hunt much like a type of large cat called a lynx, slowly stalking and pouncing on my prey. My long, spiny bristles aren't just for show, I can form a "basket-like" cage that helps me confine the prey I grasp.



B I am less than 1/2 an inch long, with a bright red abdomen, black front body part called a cephalothorax, and teal mouthparts. I have 8 eyes, but my 2, large, forward-facing eyes are most noticeable. I use my excellent eyesight to locate prey and then jump on it. I anchor a silk "safety line" when I jump.



C I have a large "golf ball"-like abdomen and a smaller head. I construct a beautiful, wheel-shaped web to catch insects. I have poor eyesight, so I rely on vibrations within the web to alert me to meals. Most people spot me in late summer into fall when I reach my largest size.



D I may be a tiny spider but I am hard to miss because of my unique webs. I make a complex web system consisting of an inverted dome-shaped web (the "bowl"), suspended above a horizontal sheet web (the "doily"). I hang from the underside of the bowl, but above the doily. I wait for prey to drop into the bowl.



An answer key is on the flip side of this paper. Use the blue letters and numbers to see how you did!

What's Buzzin' Nature Journal

Studying bugs in your own backyard.



Name: _____

Date: _____

Location: _____

Weather: Warm Hot Cool Cold Sunny Cloudy Windy Rainy
Circle all of today's weather conditions.

Where to Look for Spiders: The spiders featured in this activity are commonly found in gardens and yards. Many of these spiders may also wander into homes, crawl-spaces, and garages in search of prey, mates, or a place to lay their eggs. Remember to observe spiders in their natural habitats without picking them up.

Draw the spider you spotted:

Describe the spider you spotted:

Take a photo of your nature journal page and email it to info@missoulabutterflyhouse.org. We might include it in a future What's Buzzin' report! To get the What's Buzzin' report each week, sign up for our email newsletter at www.missoulabutterflyhouse.org.

Matching Game Answer Key: A = 3, B = 1, C = 4, and D = 2.