

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!

I am very fuzzy and come in many different colors - from blonde to brown to black, and even orange! I move fast and easily navigate tricky terrain. See if you can keep up with me as I search for new plants to eat! Soon, I will create a large cocoon made of silk and my own hairs to spend the winter in.

A

Part of my big hind legs are bright red. You may know that I can jump, but did you know that I can fly for about 40 feet? I love to eat plants! Sometimes there can be so many of us that we can become a pest in gardens or in crops. Us adults will die soon, but our eggs, left in the dirt, will hatch in the spring.

B

I am black with red veins on part of my forewings. Like many full-grown true bugs, my wings form an "X" pattern on my back. My kind tends to group up in the fall as we look for a safe place to overwinter. We mostly feed on the leaves and seeds of boxelder, maple, ash trees.

C

I am red with short, stubby black wings. I am still growing and look different than adults of my kind. I am smaller and my wings are not fully developed, which means I cannot fly! When it comes time for me to get bigger, I must shed my outer skeleton and produce a new, larger one. I will shed like this many times.

D

Red-legged
Grasshopper



1

Western
Boxelder
Bug Nymph



2

Saltmarsh Moth
Caterpillar



3

Western Boxelder Bug
Adult



4

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.

Looking for Fall Bugs: With the arrival of colder weather, it's time to say goodbye to many of our bug friends until next spring. But, there are a few out and about still preparing for winter. Plus, some of them will be looking for a warm place to stay, which might be your home! We hope you are able to find the ones we shared this week, as well as some of your very own.

Draw a bug you spotted:

Describe a bug 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 = 3.