

What are Minibeasts?

Minibeasts are little animals.

We can use the term minibeast for a wide range of animals that are classified scientifically in different 'phyla'.

We might use the term minibeast for creatures that could include insects (with 6 legs), spiders (with 8 legs), slugs, snails, woodlice, centipedes, millipedes and earthworms.

Imagine you are a little animal .. What would the world around you look like?

Why not undertake a micro minibeast safari. (see activity 20 in this [pack](#) by Natural Resources Wales)



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Minibeasts: where can we find them?

Minibeasts move in all types of different ways. .

Here are some of the possible movements, cn you try to do some of these movements? Remember to make sure you have enough space!

flying

hopping

crawling

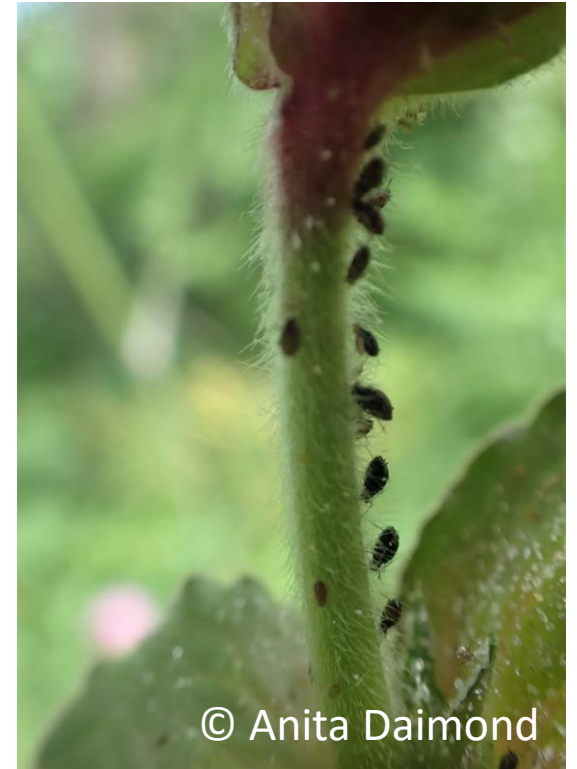
sliding

jumping

The way they move as well as what they eat will affect where we will find them.

Think; where in the woodland will we need to look for minibeasts ...?

You may need to get down on your knees to find them, or look up in the leaves above you!



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Minibeasts: how do they feed?

All the minibeasts have different roles in the ecosystem.

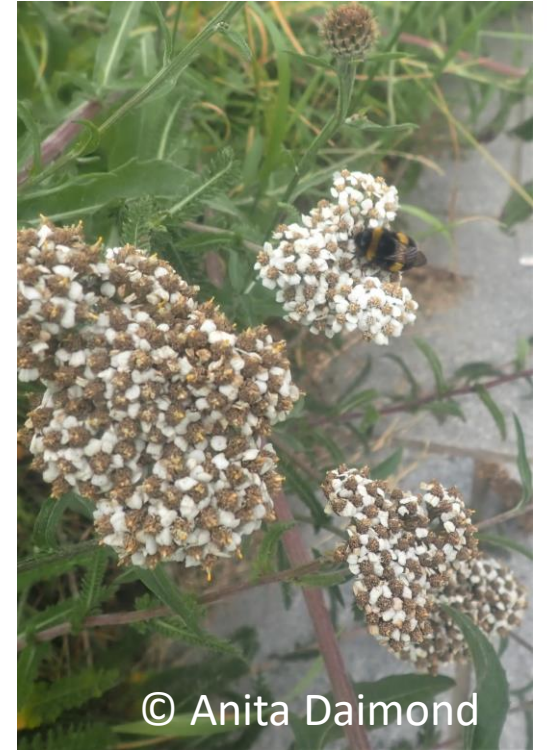
The **detritivores** collect and eat dead matter (detritus) to create rich soil.

The **herbivores** eat the vegetation (plants)

Then the herbivores are eaten by **carnivores** (animals that eat other animals).

Some are also **pollinators** which help plants to reproduce by spreading pollen.

Each of these roles are important to life in the woodland.



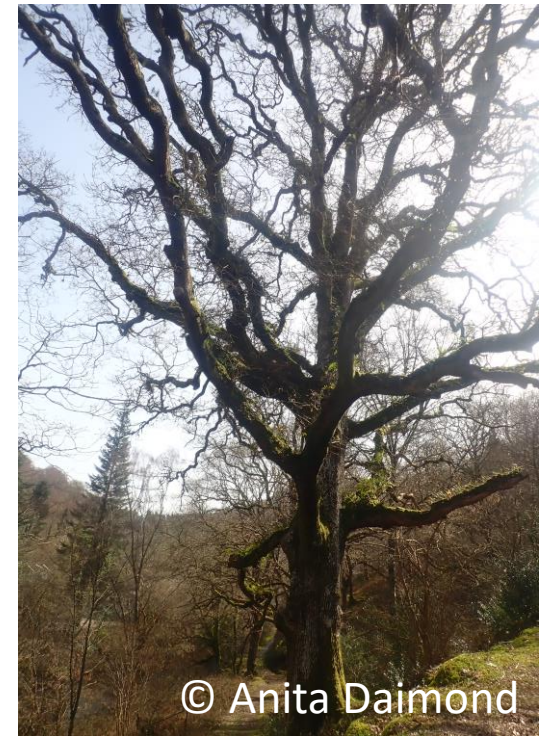
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Remember carnivores can be eaten by other carnivores too! Can you think of a carnivore that eats a carnivorous minibeast ...?

The animals of the Celtic Rainforest feed on plants, fungi and other animals.

Can you give an example of an:

- Animal that feeds on plants
- Animal that feeds on fungi
- Animal that feeds on other animals
- Animal that feed on things that have died (detritus)
- Animal that feed on animal poo
- Animal that feeds on tree seeds



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You can use this [worksheet](#) if you wish

Can you match up the descriptions with the correct type of animal?

I move underground and remove plant material into the soil and eat it.

I move from flower to flower collecting nectar and pollen and pollinate plants.

I move along the ground collecting dead material and eating it.

I move around on plants stopping to eat leaves or stems along the way.

I move along the ground and hunt insects and eat them.

I'm a pollinator

I'm a detritivore

I'm an herbivore

I'm a carnivore

I'm a detritivore

Green Silver Lines *Pseudoips prasinana*



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Can you find out what the caterpillar stage of the 'Green Silver Lines' moth eats?



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Did you match up the descriptions with the correct type of animal?

Green Silver Lines *Pseudoips prasinana*

I move underground and remove plant material into the soil and eat it.

I'm a pollinator

I move from flower to flower collecting nectar and pollen and pollinate plants.

I'm a detritivore

I move along the ground collecting dead material and eating it.

I'm an herbivore

I move around on plants stopping to eat leaves or stems along the way.

I'm a carnivore

I move along the ground and hunt insects and eat them.

I'm a detritivore



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What else would you like to learn about minibeasts?



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Minibeasts: how can we learn more?

- Go out and look for minibeasts yourself – you can use our [recording sheet](#) to collect data as you look for minibeasts in a woodland.
- Identify the minibeasts you find – there are useful links and resources provided [here](#).
- Look at your minibeasts carefully whilst thinking about where you found them and what they were doing.
- What do you think they eat? Can you find out more about their lifecycles? What else can you learn about them?



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I wonder which plants and animals rely on the minibeasts you found?
Can you find out?

[Buglife](#) can help you learn more about insects and what you can do to benefit minibeasts.



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Useful Links

- <https://www.buglife.org.uk/>
- <https://butterfly-conservation.org/butterflies/identify-a-butterfly>
- <https://butterfly-conservation.org/moths/identify-a-moth>
- <https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/trees-woods-and-wildlife/animals/>
- <https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/wildlife/how-identify/identify-caterpillars>
- [https://dnk4skl3hw8rq.cloudfront.net/assets/db4dd1fb1f9e25abe1f6206f456bb04bfcd32013/11. Minibeasts - Conservation Education - YPTE.original.pdf?1411671011](https://dnk4skl3hw8rq.cloudfront.net/assets/db4dd1fb1f9e25abe1f6206f456bb04bfcd32013/11.Minibeasts-ConservationEducation-YPTE.original.pdf?1411671011)
- <https://bit.ly/3DupfkE>
- <https://www.rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/natures-home-magazine/birds-and-wildlife-articles/food-chains/web-of-life/>



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