



School Gardening
Resources

PRIMARY LEVEL

BORD BIA
IRISH FOOD BOARD

Friend and Foe in the Garden





Time of Year	Mainly during the growing season
Aim	To acquaint children with the variety of living things that occupy the garden and recognise those that are friends and foes.*
Resources Needed	Pictures of the following: decomposers, detritivores, insects and their larvae, spider, frog, hedgehog, bluetit, blackbird.
Cross Curriculum Relevance	<p>SESE: Living things, environmental awareness and care, insect identification, food chains</p> <p>Languages: New words, literacy, spelling</p> <p>Informal Curriculum: Green Schools, Discover Primary Science</p> <p>* Avoid using the word "pest".</p>



Decomposers

Fungi: Organisms that live on living or dead matter. They like damp, dark places. They do not have stems, leaves or flowers like plants, and they make their own food using chlorophyll.

Bacteria: These are microorganisms made of one cell and they are found everywhere. They are too small for us to see without a microscope. Some are very good; others are harmful.



Detritivores

Earthworms: Earthworms belong to a group of invertebrates called annelids. Leeches are also in this group. Earthworms have segmented bodies. They aerate and add nutrients to the soil

Slugs and Snails: These belong to a group of invertebrates called molluscs. Squids and octopuses belong to this group too. They have soft bodies. They do eat and damage living plants, but many species such as the black slug also eat decaying material such as rotting leaves and dung. The leopard slug is one of these and eats dead plants as well as other slugs. The yellow garden slug eats fungi and lichens.

Millipedes: These are myriapods, a group of creatures whose bodies are formed by rings, with each ring having 1-2 pairs of legs. This group also includes the predatory centipede. Millipedes eat dead leaves and decaying plants.

Dung beetles: These invertebrates belong to the insect group. They feed on dung and use it to rear their young. They are important for breaking down dung and recycling it into the soil.

Woodlice: These invertebrates belong to the crustacean group which includes crabs, lobsters, shrimps and barnacles. Woodlice are useful recyclers and feed on decaying leaves, wood and fungi. However, they can damage seedlings and sometimes nibble ripe strawberries.



Useful Insects And Their Larvae

Ladybirds and their larvae consume aphids which damage plants by sucking their sap and causing diseases.

Lacewing and hoverfly larvae eat aphids too, as well as harmful whiteflies which suck plant juices. Hoverflies and lacewings pollinate flowers.

Wasps pollinate plants and they feed their larvae on chopped up caterpillars and aphids.

Ground beetles eat eelworms, cutworms and leatherjackets which damage the roots and tubers of plants.

Earwigs eat slugs and decaying matter, but also nibble on leaves of soft plants.



Harmful Insects

Carrot root flies lay their eggs in carrots. The grubs which hatch from the eggs burrow holes in carrots.

Caterpillars of cabbage white butterflies feed on cabbage.



Birds

Bluetits and great tits eat aphids.

Thrushes eat snails and slugs.



Frogs And Hedgehogs

Both **frogs and hedgehogs** feed on slugs and the leatherjackets which are the larvae of the Daddy Long Legs.



Mice

They will eat newly sown peas and beans.