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Made in China.

WARNING:
CHOKING HAZARD - Small parts.
Not for children under 3 years.

Backyard Bugs™

Set of 72 counters for counting and sorting fun!
6 shapes, 6 colors • Suggested activities included

Ages 3 and up

LER 0457



all six species of the same color. Give children 10 seconds to review the line up. Have them close their eyes. Take one counter away. Challenge children to identify the missing counter.

Bubbly Bug Soup



Give children a cup, pot or other container, or have them draw a circle on a piece of paper to represent a soup pot. Instruct them to "make" their own batch of bubbly bug soup according to the recipe, which you will read to them. Read the following statements aloud. When you are finished, challenge children to make up their own recipes to share.

- Stir in 1 orange bumblebee.
- Mix in all the grasshoppers.
- Drop in 2 green dragonflies.
- Shake in 1 blue spider and 1 purple spider.
- Add all the caterpillars.
- Spoon in 1 yellow beetle.
- Add a splash of swamp water and serve!



Bugs In A Bag

Set up this game for three to six players. Place one six-color set of species counters per player in a paper bag. Have children take turns drawing a counter from the bag. The first species each child chooses is the one he or she must collect to win. If a child pulls a species from the bag that has already been chosen, he or she gets another turn. Children then take turns choosing a counter from the bag (no peeking). If the counter matches his or her species, he or she gets to keep it. If it doesn't match, it is returned to the bag. The first child to collect all six colors of his or her species wins.



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Getting Started

This set of 72 color-coded, realistically shaped Bug Counters is perfect for building skills and drawing on young children's curiosity about nature. Use the counters and the activities in this guide to teach skills such as sorting, counting and spatial reasoning. First, let children engage in free play with the Bug Counters. Children may naturally start to sort the counters by color or type, or act out imaginary scenes. Help them identify each species. Ask children to share what they might know about each one. Share the fun facts below, and move on to the rest of the activities.

Fun Facts



Many people think of all creepy, crawly creatures as "bugs." The Bug Counter species actually fall into two scientific groups: insects and arachnids. The insects include the caterpillar, bumblebee, stag beetle, dragonfly and grasshopper. The tarantula is an arachnid. Use the following clues to tell the two groups apart. Insects have six legs; arachnids have eight. Insects have three basic body sections; arachnids have two. Insects usually have wings; arachnids do not. Here are more fun facts about each species.

- A **caterpillar** is actually a young butterfly. A caterpillar starts life in an egg. A few weeks after it hatches, a caterpillar is ready to become an adult butterfly. To become a butterfly, a caterpillar builds a cocoon around itself. When it breaks free of the cocoon, it has wings to fly.
- **Bumblebees** live together in families called colonies. The head of the colony is the queen. She is the only bee that has babies. The rest of the colony takes care of the babies and the nest.
- **Stag beetles** have oversized jaws that look like hooks. When a stag beetle is frightened, it sometimes lifts up the front of its body. It waves its jaws to look dangerous. Actually, those jaws wouldn't even hurt if they pinched you!
- A **dragonfly** zooms over water on see-through wings, looking for mosquitoes and other insects to eat. It catches a meal by forming its legs into a basket and scooping the insect right out of the air!
- Most **tarantulas** live in holes in the ground called burrows. At night, a tarantula peeks out of its burrow. It looks for an insect to eat. When it sees one, the tarantula runs to grab the insect. It kills the insect with poison in its fangs.
- **Grasshoppers** are powerful jumpers. Some grasshoppers have wings to help them sail even further through the air. Grasshoppers may jump up to 100 times their body length!

Who Comes Next?



Use the counters to set up a pattern based on color or species. One example: red, yellow, blue, red, yellow, blue. Another example: caterpillar, beetle, grasshopper, caterpillar, beetle, grasshopper. Ask children to continue the pattern. Try other patterns. Add to this activity by playing "Who Is Missing?" Line up all six colors of a single species, or