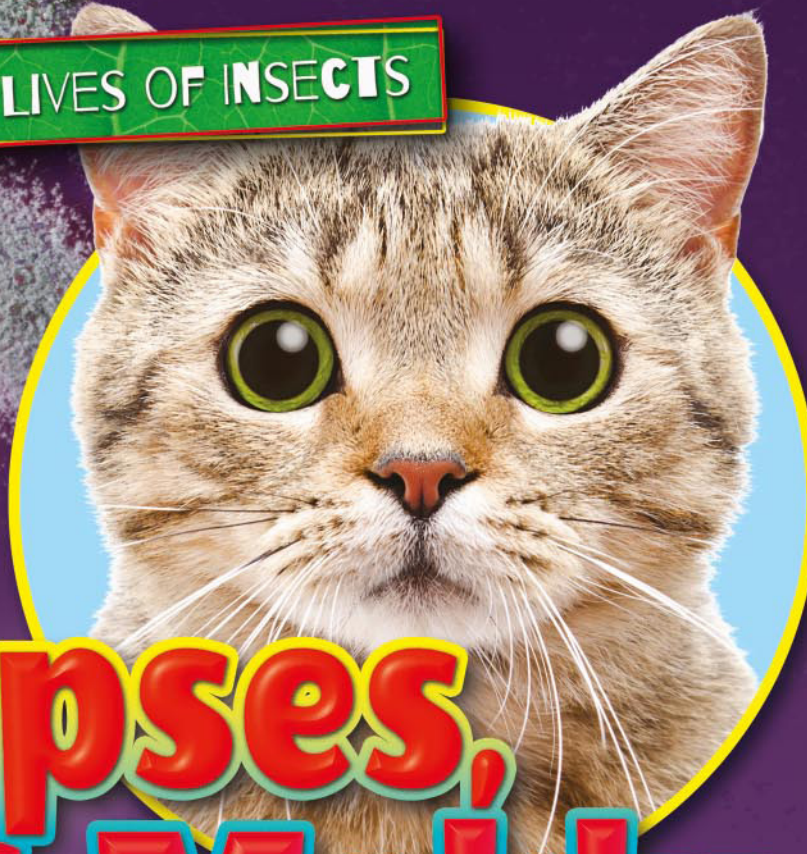
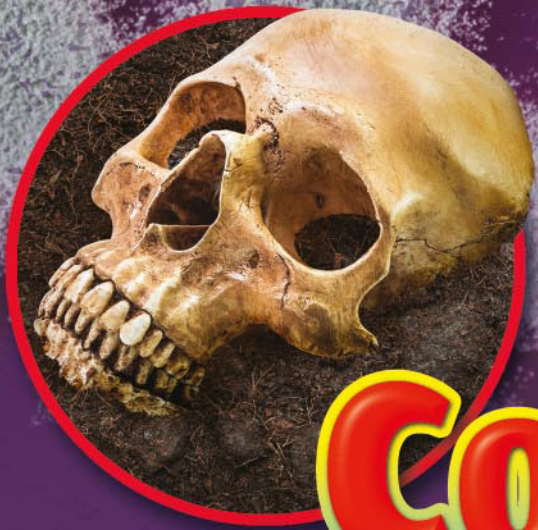
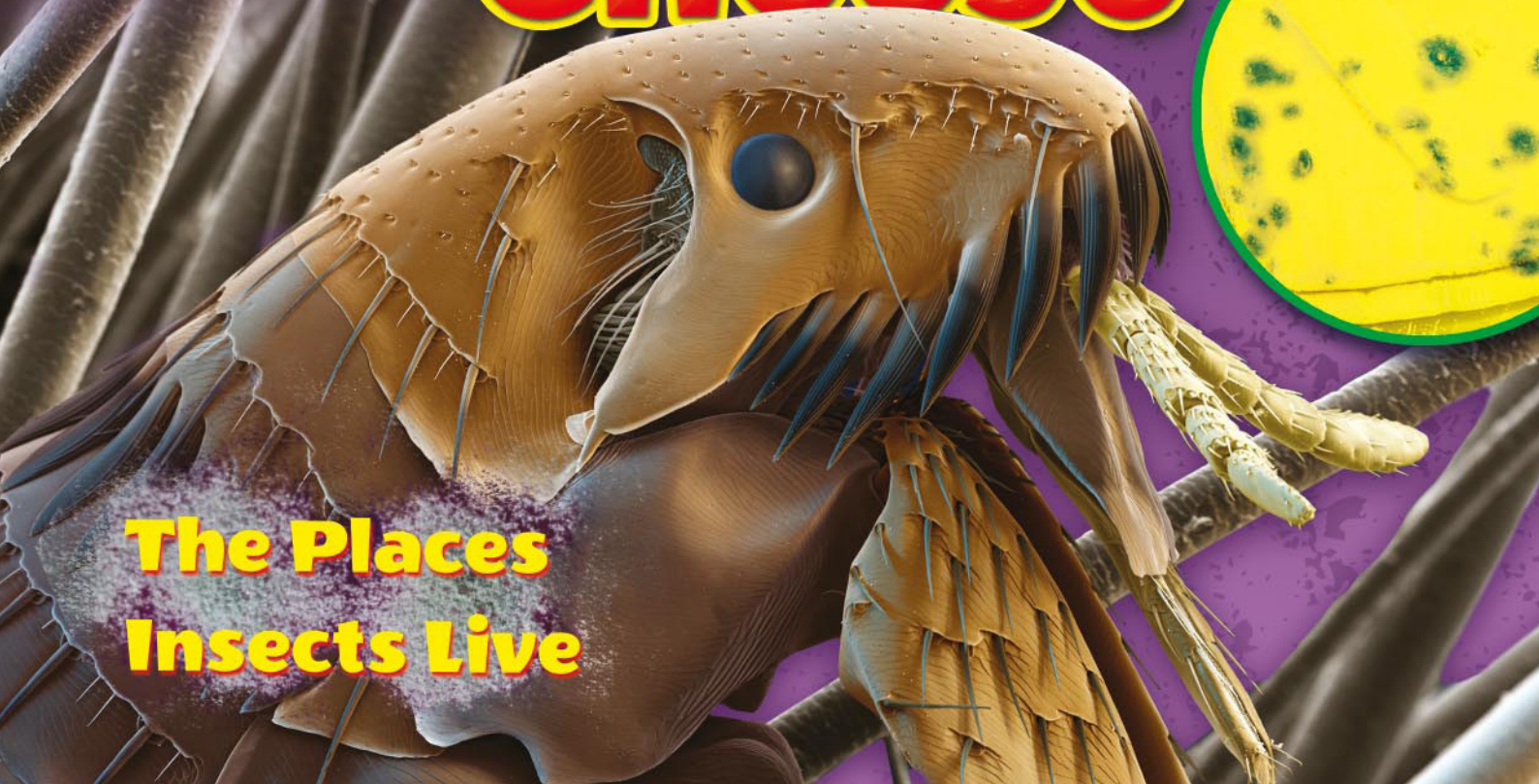


THE SECRET LIVES OF INSECTS



Corpses, Cats, & Moldy Cheese



**The Places
Insects Live**

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THE SECRET LIVES OF INSECTS

Corpses, Cats, & Moldy Cheese

The Places Insects Live



by Ruth Owen and Ross Piper

Ruby Tuesday Books

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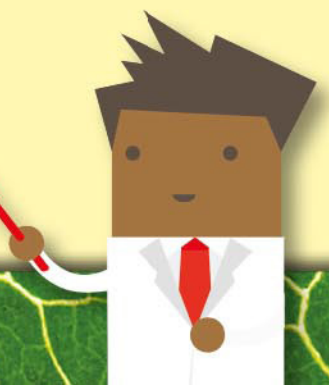
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Words shown in **bold** in the text are explained in the glossary.



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The Places Insects Live

Insects are living all around us. Some make their homes in our backyards, living on plants or in the ground beneath our feet. Some of these tiny creatures share our homes, while others actually live . . . well . . . on us!

Some insects build complicated nests that are home to thousands or even millions of family members. Others only build a nest as a safe home for their eggs and young.

Inside this book, we'll see up-close how some of Earth's tiniest animals create a place to call home.

Let's discover the secret world of insect homes. . . .

Check in to a Bug Hotel

If you've ever seen something like the structure in this photo, you've seen a bug hotel. People build bug hotels in parks and backyards to create a place where some insects can raise their young or spend the winter.



A bug hotel

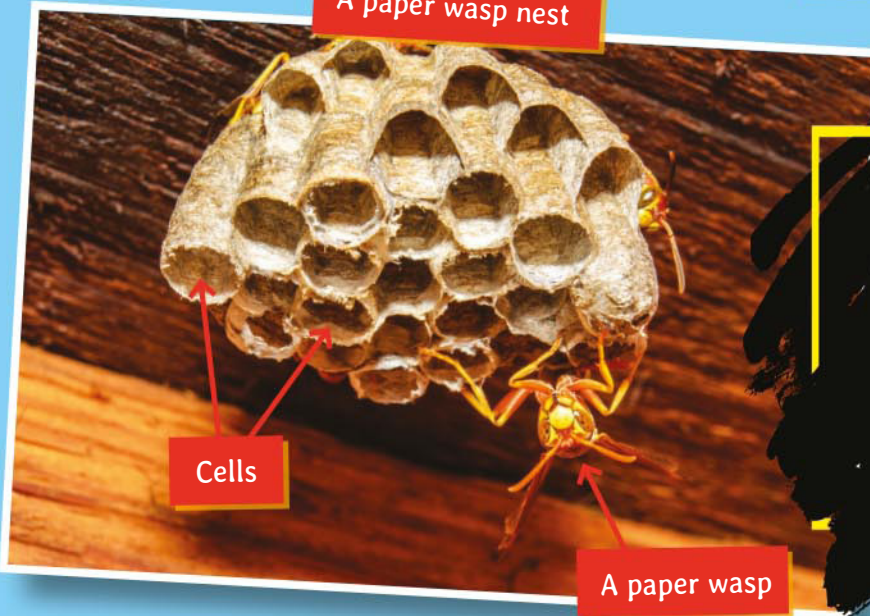
A Place for the Winter

In summer we see ladybugs on leaves and flowers. In winter, these popular insects huddle together in warm, dry hiding places to wait for spring.



Ladybugs inside the dry, hollow stems of a plant.

A paper wasp nest



Cells

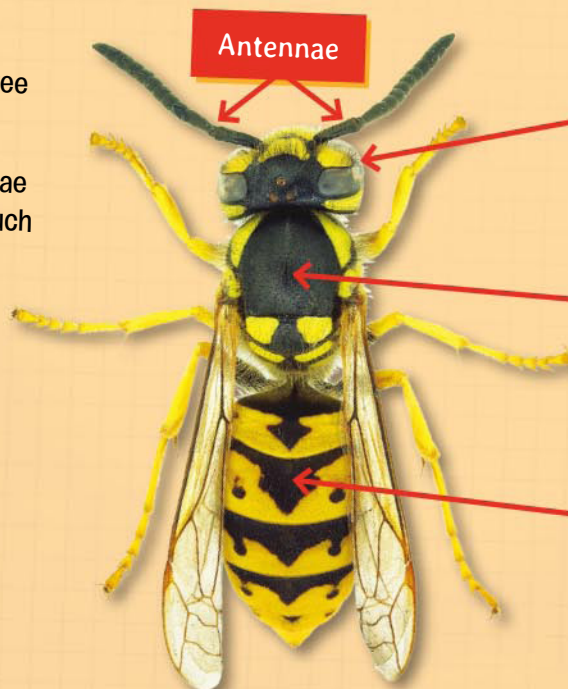
A paper wasp

A Nest Made of Paper

Paper wasps build their nests from paper made of chewed-up plants and spit. The umbrella-like nest has many tiny cells. Each of the cells contains an egg.

The Science Stuff—What Is an Insect?

- Insects are tiny animals with a body made of three main parts.
- Insects use their antennae to do different things, such as touching, smelling, or detecting sounds.
- An insect has a tough outer covering called an exoskeleton.



Antennae

The head contains an insect's brain, eyes, mouthparts, and a pair of antennae.

The thorax has six jointed legs and the insect's wings.

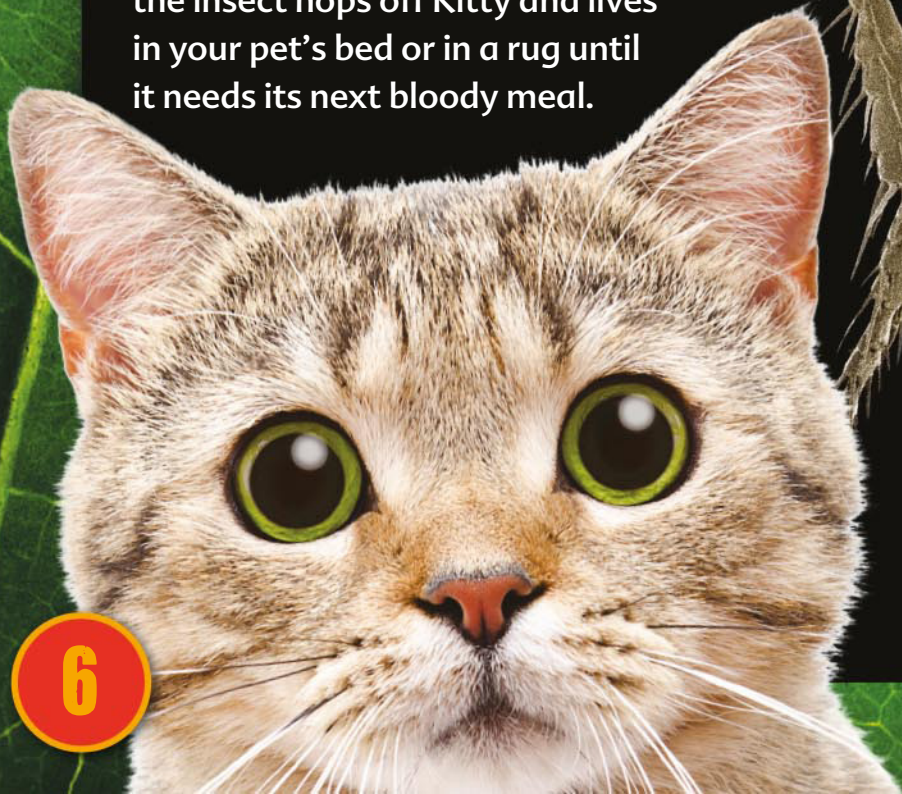
The abdomen contains an insect's digestive system and reproductive parts.

Tiny, Blood-Sucking House Guests

If you share your home with a cat, it's possible that one day some tiny, blood-sucking house guests will move in—cat fleas!

At first, a flea makes itself at home on your pet's body. Kitty isn't just a cozy place to live, though. Your cat is a source of food for the hungry invader.

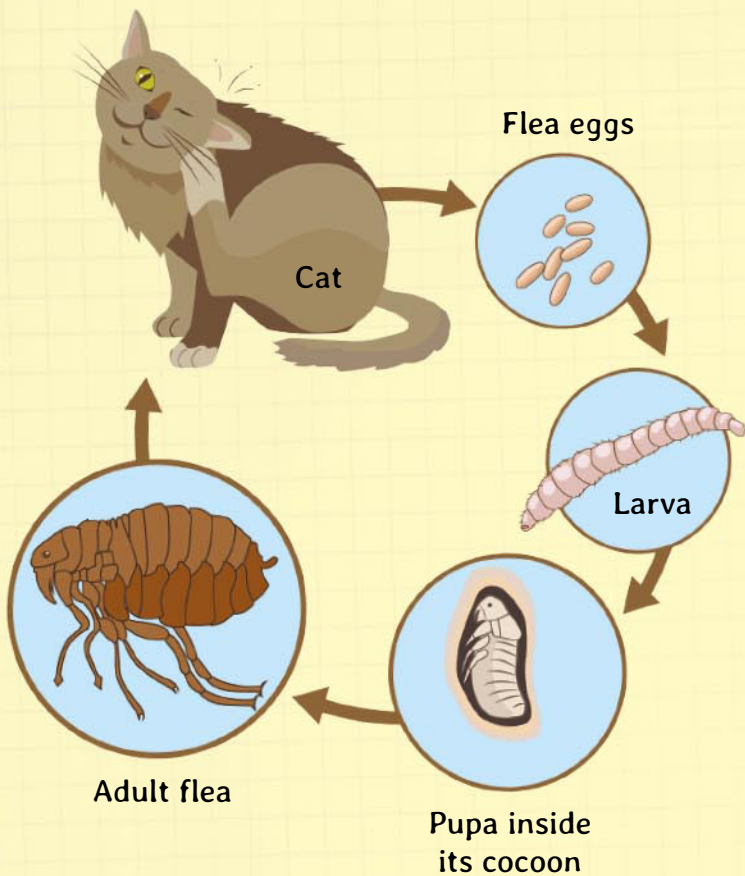
The flea sucks a blowout meal of blood from your cat with its sharp mouthparts. Then the insect hops off Kitty and lives in your pet's bed or in a rug until it needs its next bloody meal.



A cat flea's body is actually flat to help it move through the hairs of a cat's thick coat.

The Science Stuff

A Cat Flea's Life Cycle



Once a female cat flea has mated and drunk a meal of blood, she lays eggs.

The flea usually lays her eggs on furniture, in carpets, and in your pet's bed.

A tiny, worm-like **larva** hatches from each egg.

Within two weeks, the larva becomes a **pupa**. It spins a **cocoon** of sticky silk from its own body. Inside the cocoon, it becomes an adult flea.

The flea waits inside its cocoon until it feels warmth or vibrations. Then it knows that Kitty is nearby. The new flea emerges from the cocoon and hops onto your pet for a meal.

Home Sweet Home

Cat fleas can live on cats and dogs. They may even jump onto a human to get a meal of blood.

What Do Baby Fleas Eat?

A flea larva eats flakes of skin and pet hair. It also feeds on flea dirt, which is the dry, bloody poop of adult fleas!