

What Happens to Insects In Winter?

(October 2019)

In the summer, we spot insects everywhere, but after the temps drop, they vanish. Then, in the spring, they come back. How do they get through the long, cold months without flannels or blankets?

Insects have skills that help them adjust to winter. Some migrate or find spots in which to hide, some change their body makeup to withstand the cold, and some pass away.

You might be in shock to know that some bugs migrate just like birds. Before the first frost hits, hundreds of insects that exist in cold parts of the world travel to hot spots or the tropics for winter. Monarch butterflies travel many miles to Mexico or California. Migrating insects do not want to tire out their wings, so they drift on air currents to assist them.

The next method is called diapause. This is a state of rest in which an insect does not do a thing except sit still and hang out until warmer days. During diapause, some insects make a kind of antifreeze to stop ice from forming in their bodies.

This method does not fall under survival, but some insects die before winter sets in. Before they do, they lay a number of eggs that will hatch in the spring. They are gone, but their offspring are not.

Insects, much like humans, stick close to one another to keep warm. Honeybees are big on this method. Ants move far under the ground and hang out in bunches where there is warmth in numbers. Ladybugs stick together on a rock or a branch to fend off the chill.

And then some insects do what a lot of us wish we could do — they attempt to hide! If we do not spot them first, some bugs are content to find a safe spot in our homes. When the days warm up, they exit.

People and insects have a lot in common when it comes to getting through the winter months. Some of us move to warmer climates, some of us snuggle, and many of us wish we could just hide. So the next time you have a bug trespass, do not get frantic. Dispel your thoughts of distress and disgust. After all, you both just want to get warm.

Teacher Resources

Please note: this non-controlled readable text passage features a ***description text structure***. As such, it is written to be ***at least 80% decodable at Substep 3.3***. A specific decodability score is listed below.

- This text passage is 80.48% decodable at Substep 3.3

Text Easability Scores

If you would like to measure the text easability scores of this passage, please follow the directions below.

1. Visit the Coh-Metrix Text Easability Assessor website at <http://tea.cohmetrix.com/>. If you do not already have a login and password, create one. It is free and easy to sign up for access to the website.
2. Once you have created an account and sign in, you will be taken to a page with an empty, white text box. Copy and paste the text from this passage into the empty, white text box. Make sure you are only copying and pasting the body of the passage. Do not include the title, date, or any of the resources present in the passage.
3. When you have pasted the passage into the text box, click on the red button beneath the text box that says "Analyze." There will be a short delay and after a few seconds, you will see a bar graph appear to the right of the screen.
4. The bar graph will give you the percentages for several text characteristics including: narrativity, syntactic simplicity, word concreteness, referential cohesion, and deep cohesion.
5. Below the bar graph, the Flesch Kincaid Grade Level is also included for your benefit.
6. Lastly, a paragraph is provided that explains the meaning of the measurements of the text characteristics for your particular passage.
7. Once you have completed measuring your passage, you can click on the "Clear" button below the text box and measure another passage, if you wish.

This text passage is archived under *Animals*.