The Insect Information Website. A source for insect information, and links to the handouts and referred fact sheets used in Master Gardener training, is housed within the Department of Bioagricultural Sciences and Pest Management (soon to be Agricultural Biology) at Colorado State University. The link to this site is https://agbio.agsci.colostate.edu/outreach-button/insect-information/

Some Ideas for Your Insect Library


This is a new, and wholly revised edition of a book first published in 2004. Designed as a field guide to North American insects of garden plants, including vegetables, fruits, flowers, trees/shrubs and turfgrass. The most outstanding feature is the photographs, over 3100 in this edition; mention of some 1500 species is made with photographs for most and multiple images for key species.


Developing a guide for insects is difficult given their incredible diversity but this new guide is the easiest to use and look at. It is extensively illustrated with photographs (ca 2,350 images) and well organized.


A book designed for an introductory entomology class that tries to cram in everything-you-need-to-know-about-insects in one class. Lots of photographs.


Probably the best introduction to the world of living insects available. Full of well-written, fascinating stories of common insects and a healthy dose of philosophy.


This is the standard text for introductory college entomology courses that emphasize insect identification. Excellent keys to adult stages of all North American insect families. Illustrations are among the best for completeness and clarity. A brief description of the biology of each insect family is included. The use of a microscope is usually necessary for most identifications.


A quite accessible field guide style book on this vast topic. Includes information on habits as well as basic biology.


In recent years some outstanding guides have been developed that allow one to learn the types of dragonflies and damselflies found in various regions of North America. This is an outstanding, very well illustrated, treatment of what one will find in Colorado.

Probably the best single source to help you try and figure out what types of bees you may be seeing in the neighborhood.


These two books, produced through the Xerces Society, an organization dedicated to conservation of invertebrates (such as insects), are excellent treatments on how to improve habitat for pollinators and natural enemies of insect pests, respectively.

Colorado State University Publications

There are two Extension Bulletins/booklets on insects available through the University Resource Center, Colorado State University, 115 General Services Bldg./Rm 4061, Ft. Collins, CO 80523. Phone: (970) 491-6198. Web address: https://csuextstore.com/ Email: ccs_resourcecenter@mail.colostate.edu


Entomology Fact Sheets from Colorado State University are available on the Web at: https://extension.colostate.edu/topic-areas/insects/?target=publications. A large number of publications are available on-line through the Colorado State Insect Information Web Site (https://agbio.agsci.colostate.edu/outreach-button/insect-information/). It is found within the Department of Agricultural Biology https://agbio.agsci.colostate.edu/ (formerly Bioagricultural Sciences and Pest Management). If you go through the Department Home Page, click on “Entomology”, then click on “Insect Information” in the pop-up menu. You will find links to sections such as Arthropods of Colorado Fact Sheets, Emerald Ash Borer, Japanese Beetle, Bed Bugs, Miscellaneous Publications, and sections where the powerpoints and handouts used in Master Gardener entomology programs are posted.

Some Insect Museums

The Butterfly Pavilion and Insect Center. This is located at 6252 West 104th Ave in Westminster and is open every day except Monday. Special tours can be made by arrangement.

Phone: (303) 469-5441
Email: www.butterflies.org

The May Museum of Natural History. This is located along the Highway 115 just outside Colorado Springs enroute to Penrose and Canon City - marked with a huge rhinoceros beetle at the side of the road. It is open from May 1-October 1. Special arrangements for large groups can be made at other times.

Phone: (719) 576-0450
Email: https://coloradospringsbugmuseum.com/
Some Good Websites

Colorado Insect Information Website https://agbio.agsci.colostate.edu/outreach-button/insect-information/
A source for over 200 fact sheets on common/important insects of Colorado, and more.

Entomological Society of America (http://www.entsoc.org/)
Home page of the national association dedicated to entomological sciences. Links to other entomological associations and departments.

BugGuide.net (http://bugguide.net/node/view/15740)
A web site dedicated to posting and identifying images or insects and other arthropods.

American Arachnological Society
http://www.americanarachnology.org/
Home page of the national association dedicated to the study of arachnids. Several good links to information on spiders, scorpions, windscorpions and other arachnids

Grasshoppers: Their Identification, Biology and Management
http://www.sidney.ars.usda.gov/grasshopper/ID_Tools/
This USDA site consolidates numerous grasshopper-related resources (including the excellent material from Wyoming).

BugWood/IPM Images (http://www.ipmimages.org)
A repository of insect images (including a great many by CSU personnel), particularly emphasizing those of economic importance. The use of these slides is allowed for all educational purposes; commercial uses do require permission, which is almost always freely given. Best source if you need insect images.

Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation. https://xerces.org/
The Xerces Society concerns itself with conservation of native North American “bugs” and has developed numerous (usually free) information sheets related to ways to conserve and enhance habitat for bees, butterflies…. … and if you are in Western Colorado don’t forget to check out the Western Colorado Entomology Website (http://wci.colostate.edu/ or https://wci.extension.colostate.edu/) – a particularly good site for local insect issues affecting western Colorado!

Suppliers of Insect Collecting Equipment

Ben Meadows Company
3589 Broad St.
Atlanta, GA  30341
Phone: (800) 241-6401 www.benmeadows.com
Carries sweep nets, pins, killing jar, pinning blocks and one size (12” x 16” x 2.5") of display case.

Bio-Quip Products
2321 Gladwick St.
Rancho Dominguez, CA  90220
Phone: (310) 324-0620 www.bioquip.com
The most complete source for materials related to insect collection and preservation. BioQuip also carries a very extensive library of entomology-related books.
Carolina Biological Supply  
2700 York Rd.  
Burlington, NC  27215  
Phone: (800) 334-5551  
www.carolina.com  
A large biological supply house, they carry #2 pins, a display box and an insect net.

Forestry Suppliers, Inc.  
P.O. Box 8397  
Jackson, MS  39284-8397  
Phone: (800) 647-5368  
www.Forestry-Suppliers.com  
Carries a good range of insect collecting and display items.

Gempler's  
P.O. Box 270  
Belleville, WI  53508  
Phone: (800) 382-8473  
www.gemplers.com  
Oriented towards pest management, Gempler's sells a variety of insect nets, pheromone other insect traps

Great Lakes IPM  
7563 N. Crystal Rd  
Vestaburg, 48891  
Phone: (800 235-0285)  
www.greatlakesipm.com  
A company that carries an extremely wide variety of products related to insect trapping (e.g. pheromone traps) and sampling.

Nebraska Scientific  
3823 Leavenworth St.  
Omaha, NE  68105-1180  
Phone: (800) 228-7117  
www.nebraskascientific.com  
Carries the basic supplies used in insect collection (sweep nets, pins, display boxes, killing jars)

WARD'S Natural Science  
P.O Box 92919  
Rochester, NY  14692-9012  
Phone: (800) 962-2660  
www.wardsci.com  
A large biological supply house that carries a wide selection of basic insect collecting and display supplies. (Look under Entomology Supplies)