

Insects are everywhere, and they are crucial for our ecosystems. They pollinate flowers, fruits and vegetables. They break down dead material, so the nutrients can return to the soil. Insects such as ants help aerate the soil by digging tunnels and loosening it up. This promotes plant growth.

Getting started

- **Use natural light:** Reflective wings on some insects may reflect light, causing a glare in the photo which could make it difficult for the species to be identified. Try shooting around sunrise and sunset for best results.
- **Mind the background:** Avoid any light-coloured branches or leaves that might reflect light and defocus the camera. Look for clean, uncluttered backgrounds that will make the insect stand out.
- **Practice ethical photography:** Avoid disturbing your subjects or their natural habitat, which can cause them harm. Using the zoom function on your camera will allow you to take close-up shots, without getting too close.



Photos (clockwise from top left): Widow spimmer, photo by Andrew Colton ; great spangled fritillary, photo by William McIntyre; monarch on butterflyweed, photo by Mhairi McFarlane (NCC staff).