

## Kids Ask Dr. Bug

Home to more than plants, kids ask Dr. Tamra Reall about the curious things found in the garden.

### Are daddy longlegs spiders? Ava, 8

Depending on what part of the world you live in, there are a few critters that are considered daddy long legs: some cellar spiders, harvestmen, crane flies, and even a flower in western Australia are given the common name *daddy longlegs*. Here in the US, when someone says daddy longlegs, they are typically talking about harvestmen, also known as harvesters and Opiliones. While harvesters are arachnids and have eight legs like spiders, they are not spiders. In fact, they are more closely related to mites or scorpions than spiders. Harvesters have a single body part, called a cephalothorax that includes their head, with one pair of eyes. Spiders also have a cephalothorax with a clearly separate head and three to four pairs of eyes. Harvesters are omnivores, eating small insects, plants and fungi.



### Can an ant hurt me? Sophia, 10

There are more than 450 species of ants in the US! Most of these will not hurt you. Ants can bite and some can sting, although most are too small to actually bite a human and the sting is barely felt. However, a couple of common species here in Missouri, acrobat ants and pavement ants, that can sting us. Fortunately, we don't have fire ants or harvester ants in the KC region - their sting is much worse.

### What does a bee see? William, 12

Bee eyes are very different from our eyes. First of all, they have two compound eyes which would be like tons of tiny eyes, called receptors, combined in one. Each of those receptors can see brightness and color. Bees have three more simple eyes on the tops of their head called ocelli. Compound eyes see ultraviolet (UV) lightwaves. Bees can't see the color red, but they can easily see light and dark, edges, and shapes. Bees need to find pollen and nectar from flowers and some flowers help them out by providing "landing guides" that point to the food. And guess what?! These special patterns are only seen in UV! Go to this website, or scan the QR code, to see an example: [http://www.naturfotograf.com/UV\\_GERA\\_SYL.html](http://www.naturfotograf.com/UV_GERA_SYL.html)



Scan the code to see a flower the way a bee may see it!

### We found a murder hornet! Can it hurt me? Ben, 12

The Asian giant hornet, sometimes called the "murder hornet", has only been found in Washington state and nowhere else in the United States. Importantly, the two hornets found were dead. So, the hornet you found isn't likely an Asian giant hornet. Please send me a picture ([reallt@missouri.edu](mailto:reallt@missouri.edu)) and I will identify the insect you found. Many bees and wasps can sting, but they don't usually do so unless they feel threatened, such as if you get too close to their nest. One of the best things you can do to overcome the scary hype around this insect is to learn more about our bees and wasps. There are many helpful insects with similar colors, and we need to protect them.

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