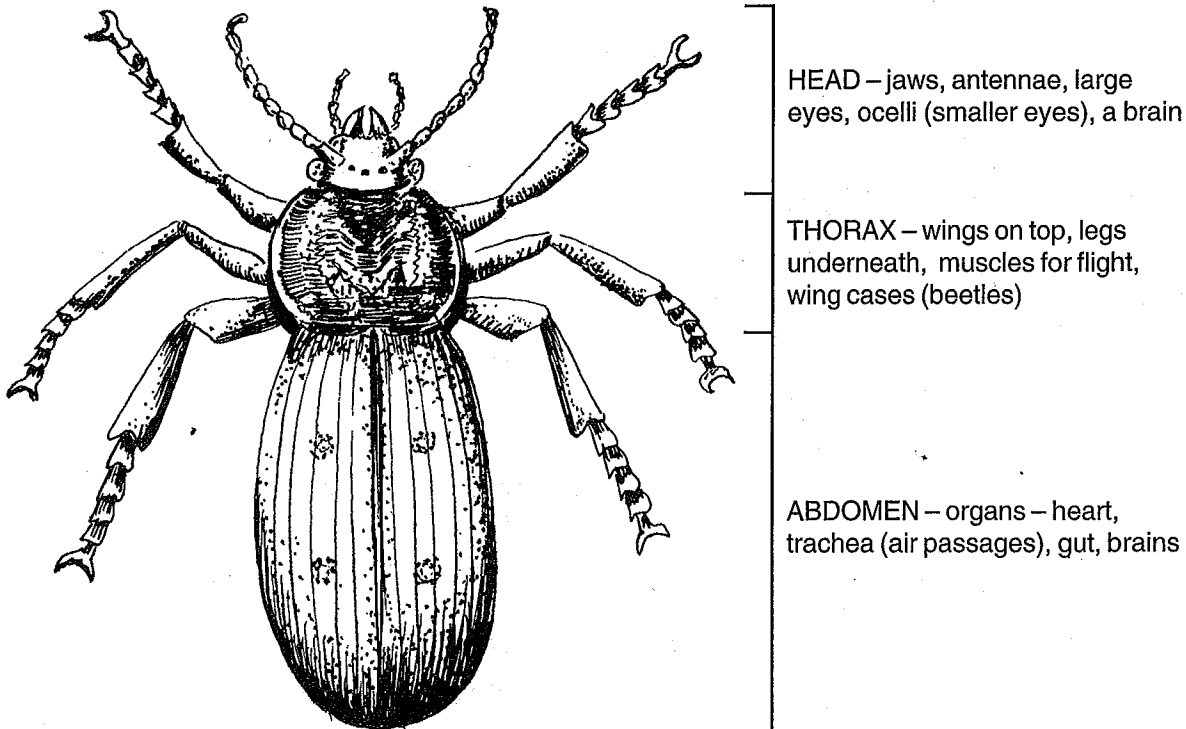




What is an insect?

Insects belong to a group of creatures called **Arthropoda** (Latin for 'joined foot' or 'jointed leg'). (It is pronounced 'arthr-o-poda'. They have an **external skeleton** which protects their inner organs, muscles and parts. Most insects have wings and can fly. Wings and six legs are attached to the thorax, the midsection of insect bodies.

All insects have three body sections:



Did You Know?

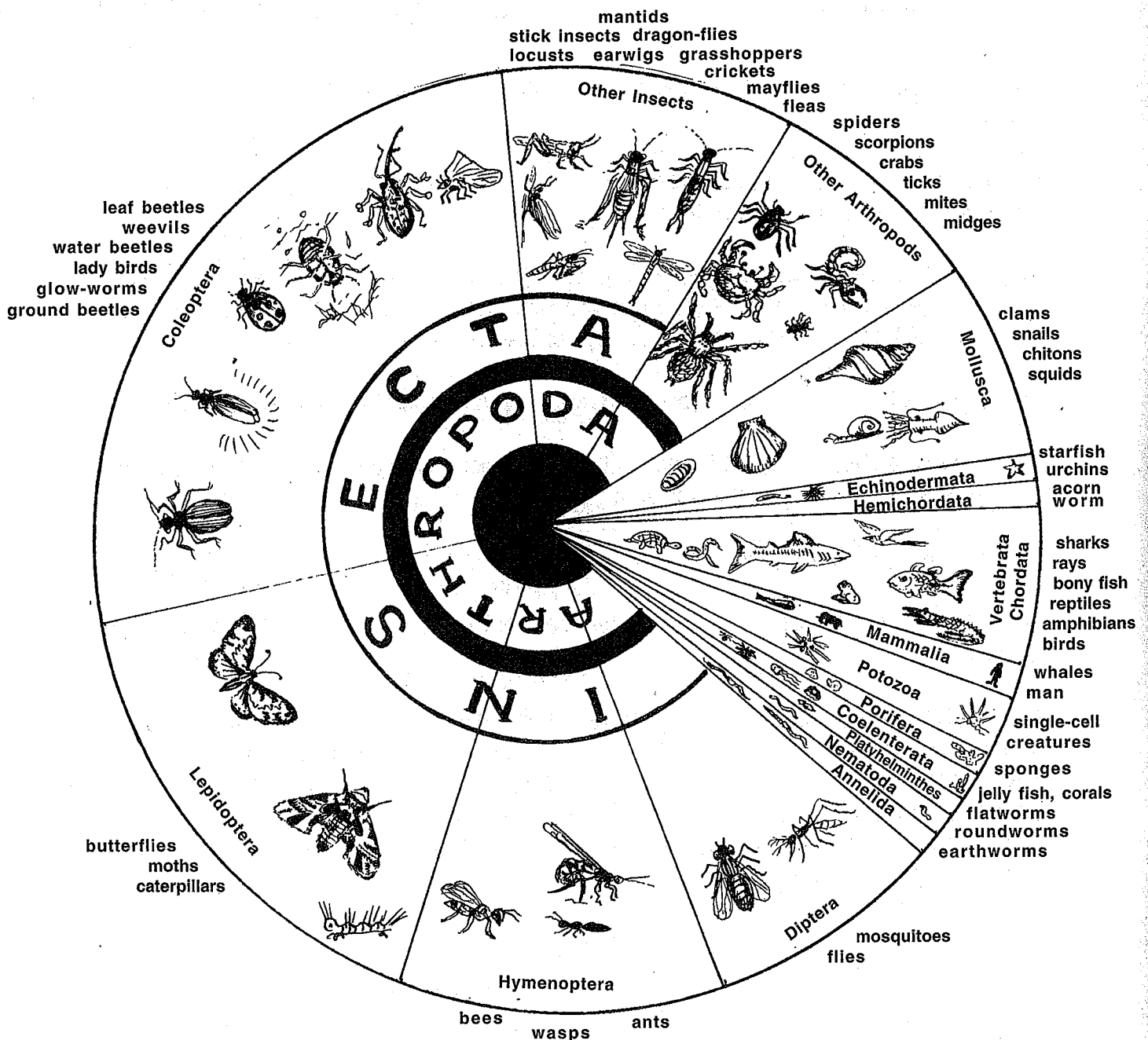
- ☞ Insects have many brains throughout their bodies.
- ☞ The Goat Moth has 1647 muscles.
- ☞ Insects can be found all over our planet. They live on land, in freshwater, the Arctic, the Antarctic, the desert, high on mountains and deep in caves. Rainforests can sustain 65 million insects per acre.
- ☞ There are at least 200 million insects for **every human being** on Earth!
- ☞ The study of insects is called **Entomology**.
- ☞ Insects *are* an important, essential and necessary part of our ecosystem. We couldn't survive without them. They clean up our rubbish, give us honey to spread on our toast, pollinate our crops, colour our world in Spring, sing songs for us on hot summer nights, light up our dark nights with glowing lights and they even stop our pests getting out of control!



How important are minibeasts?

How important are Minibeasts?

The world of minibeasts is really huge. Look at this pie-graph below. It compares the number of species of life on planet Earth. Notice that human beings are only a part of a small family called **mammalia** (mammals), which itself is only a tiny part of the animal world.



Did You Know?

Compared to the **one** human species (man), there are 800,000 species of insects already identified and many more are still **undiscovered**. There are no less than 30,000 species of spiders and 650 species of scorpions in warm regions of the world alone! So most creatures on Earth are minibeasts.