

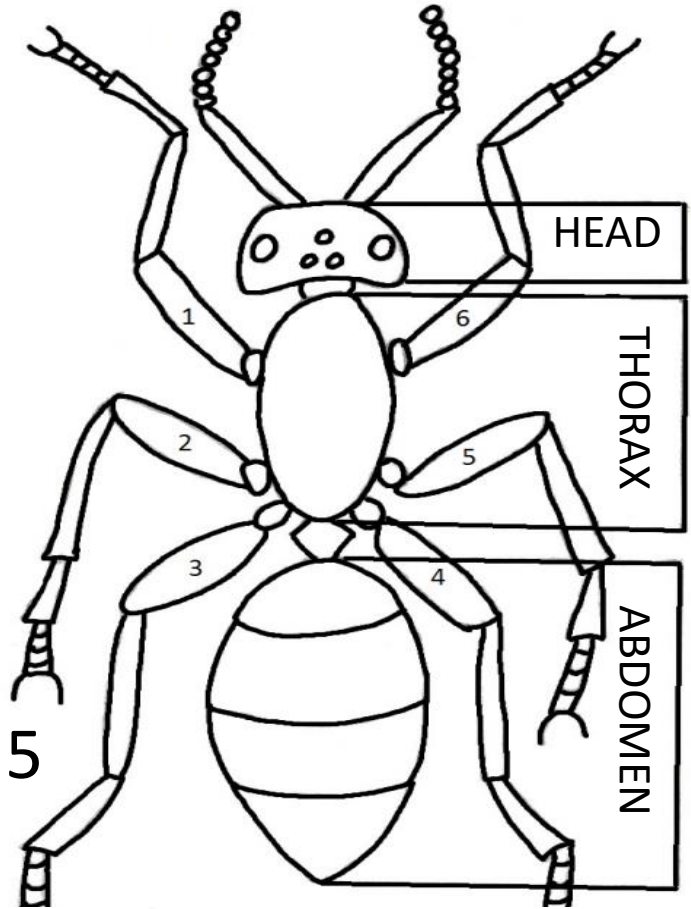
**A
Coloring Book of
Beneficial Insects: BIG
Jobs for Small
Bugs**

Samantha Willden

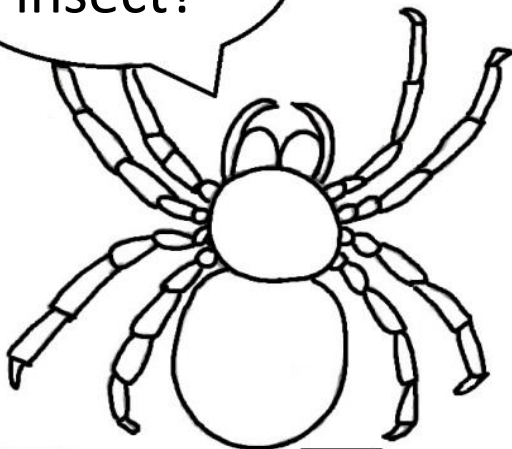
What is an insect?

Insects have:

1. An **exoskeleton**, or protective outer shell
2. A **head, thorax and abdomen**
3. **Six legs**. Count them: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6. All there!

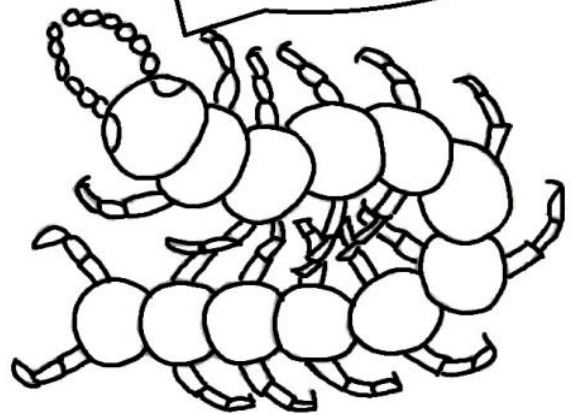


Am I an insect?



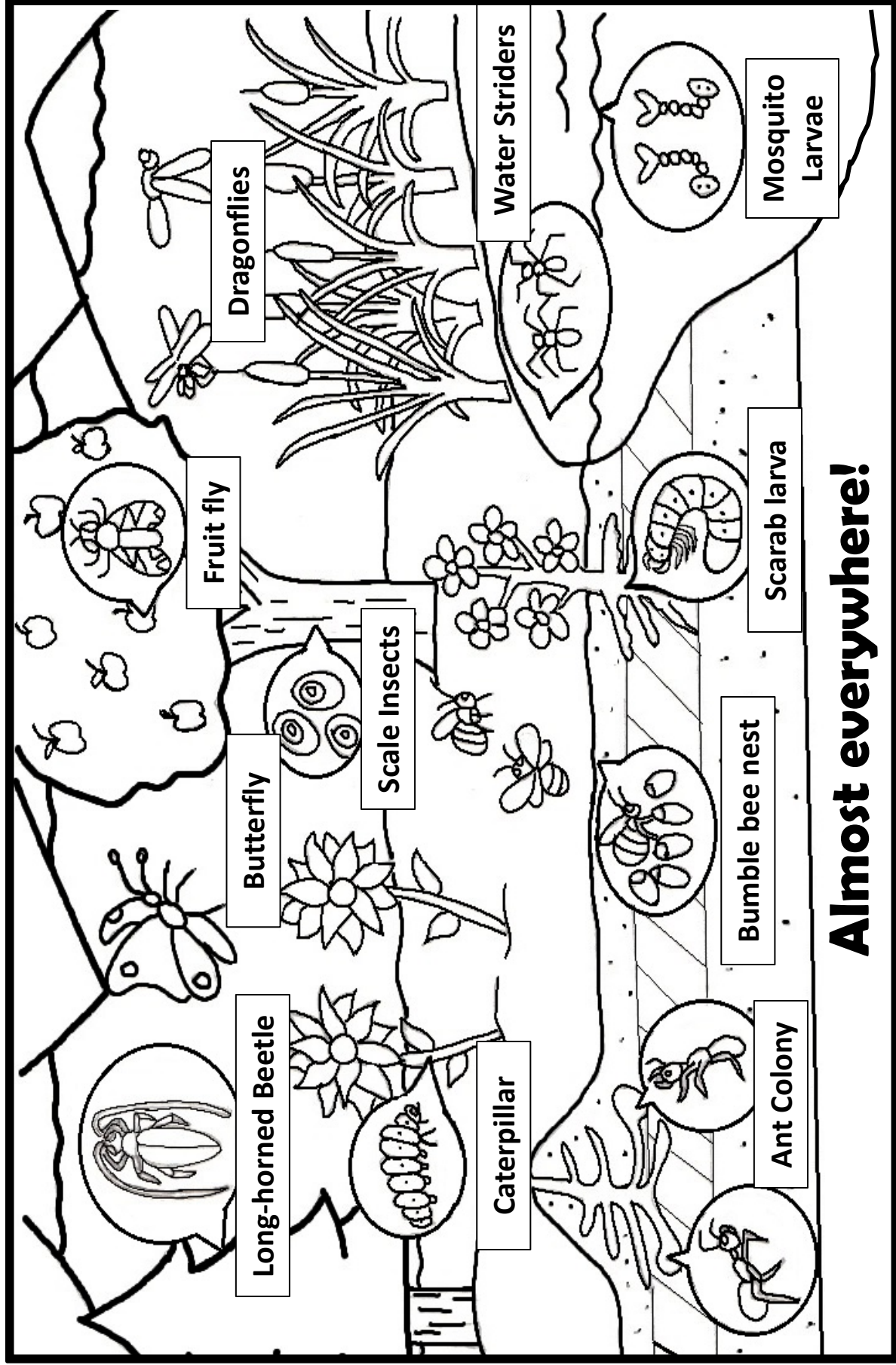
Yes No

What about me?



Yes No

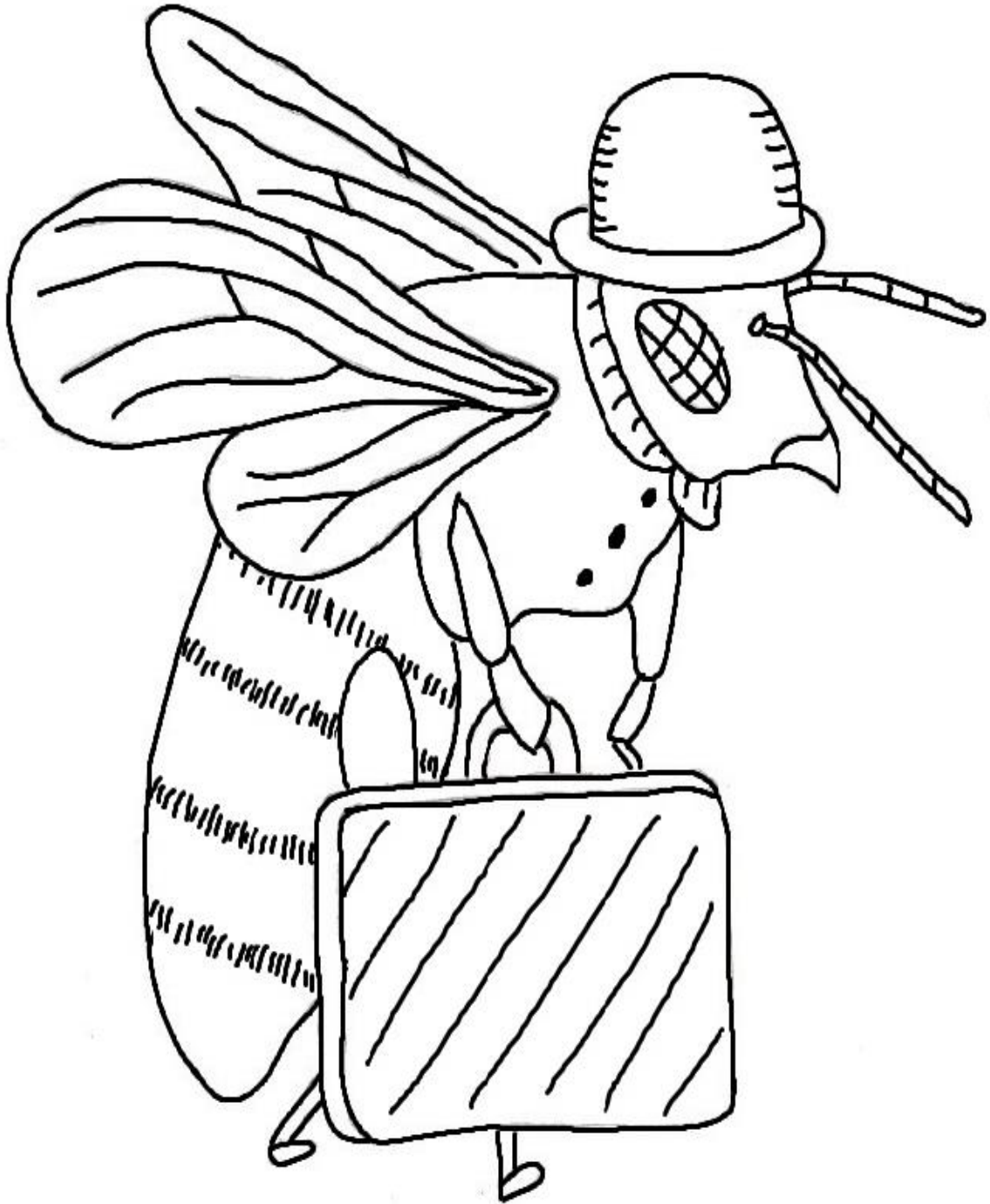
Where are insects found?



Almost everywhere!

What do insects do?

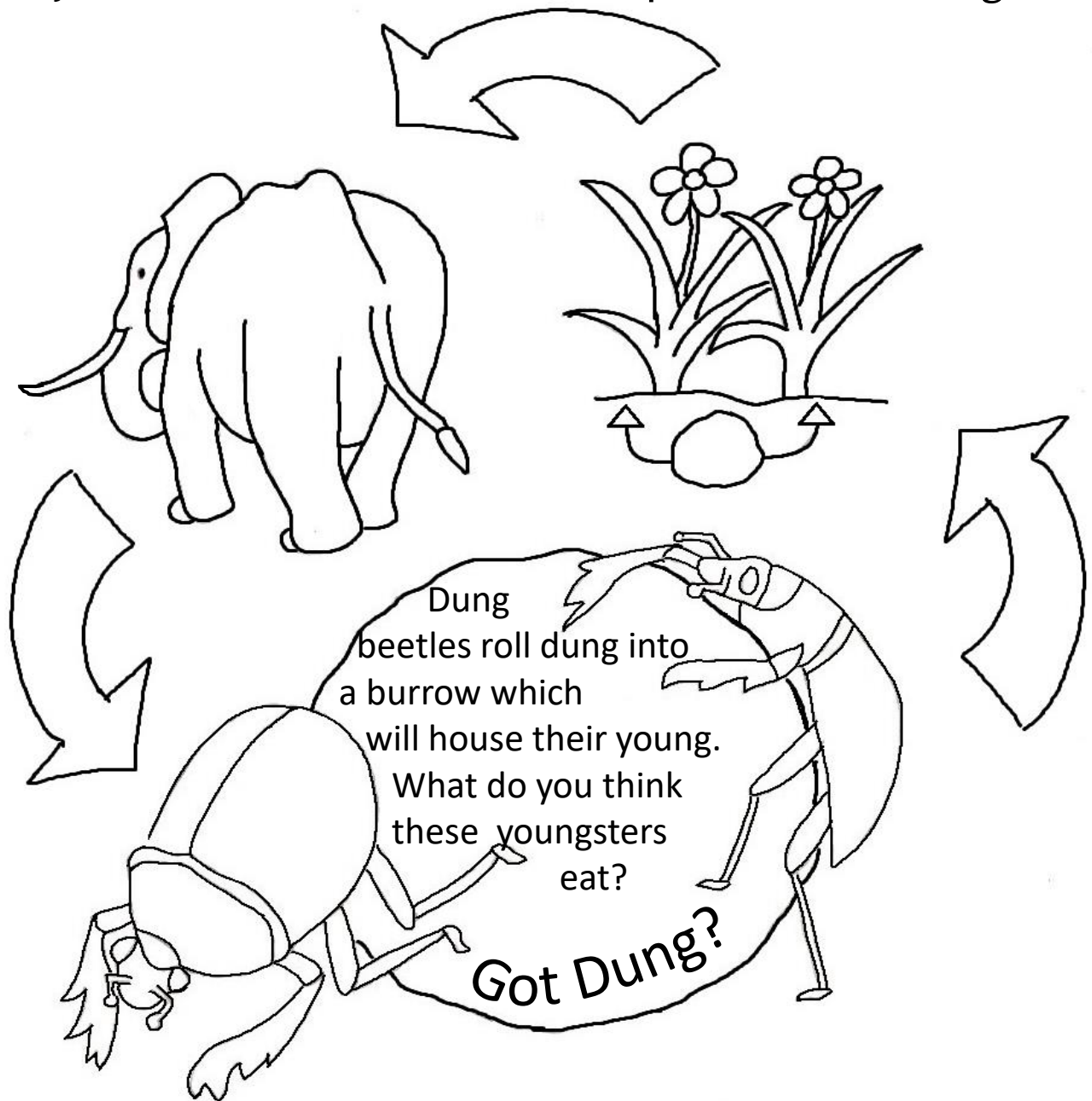
Like us, each insect has a job to do. These jobs help our *environment* function.



And these jobs include...

DECOMPOSERS

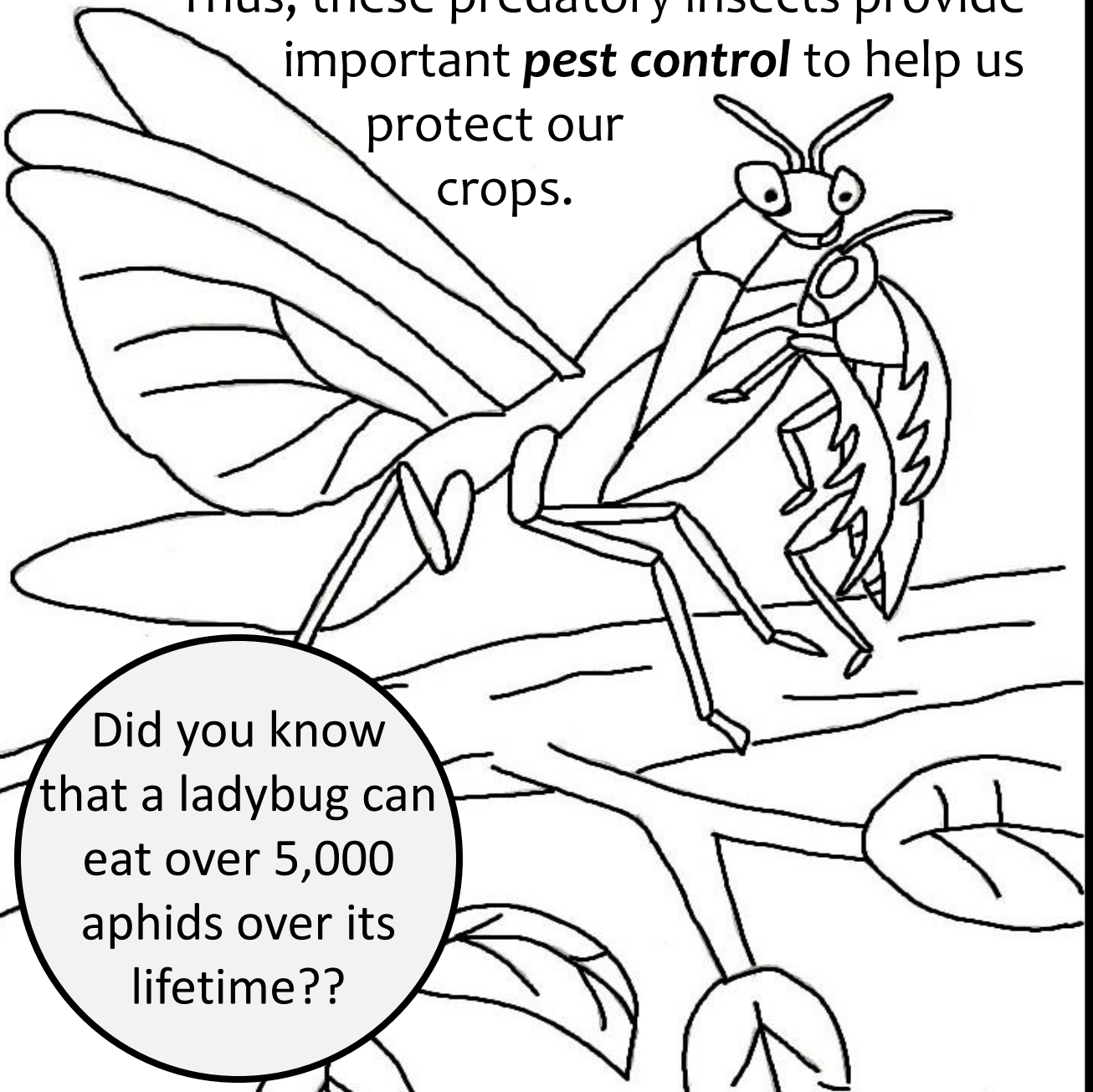
Some insects are *decomposers*, meaning they feed on dead things, and sometimes dung. Yuck, right? Good thing these insects don't think so! By doing this, these insects recycle nutrients into the soil that plants can use to grow.



PEST CONTROL

Many insects are **predators**, meaning they eat other insects. Sometimes, these predators eat **pests**, or insects that cause harm to our crops.

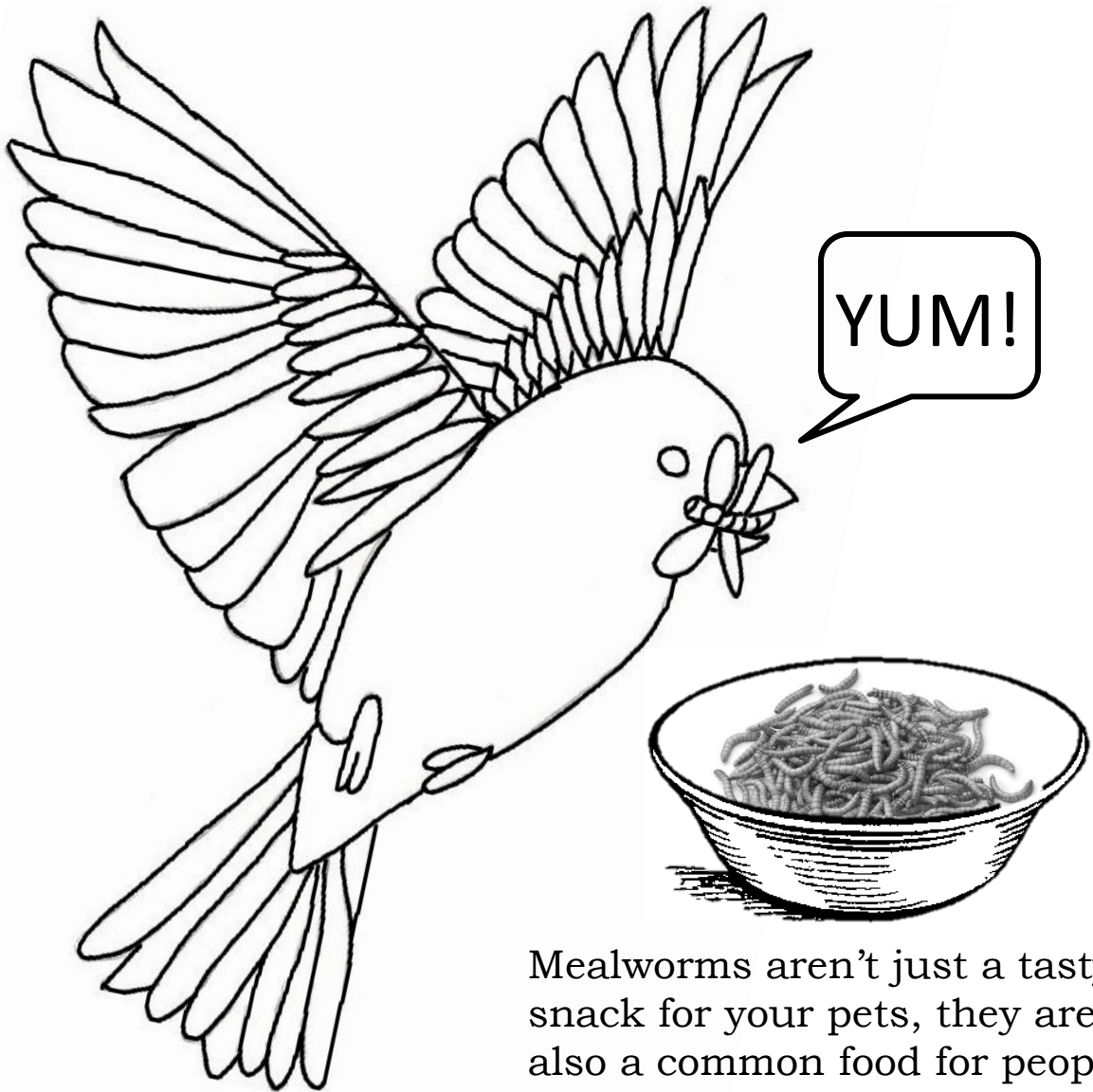
Thus, these predatory insects provide important **pest control** to help us protect our crops.



Did you know that a ladybug can eat over 5,000 aphids over its lifetime??

THEY'RE FOOD!

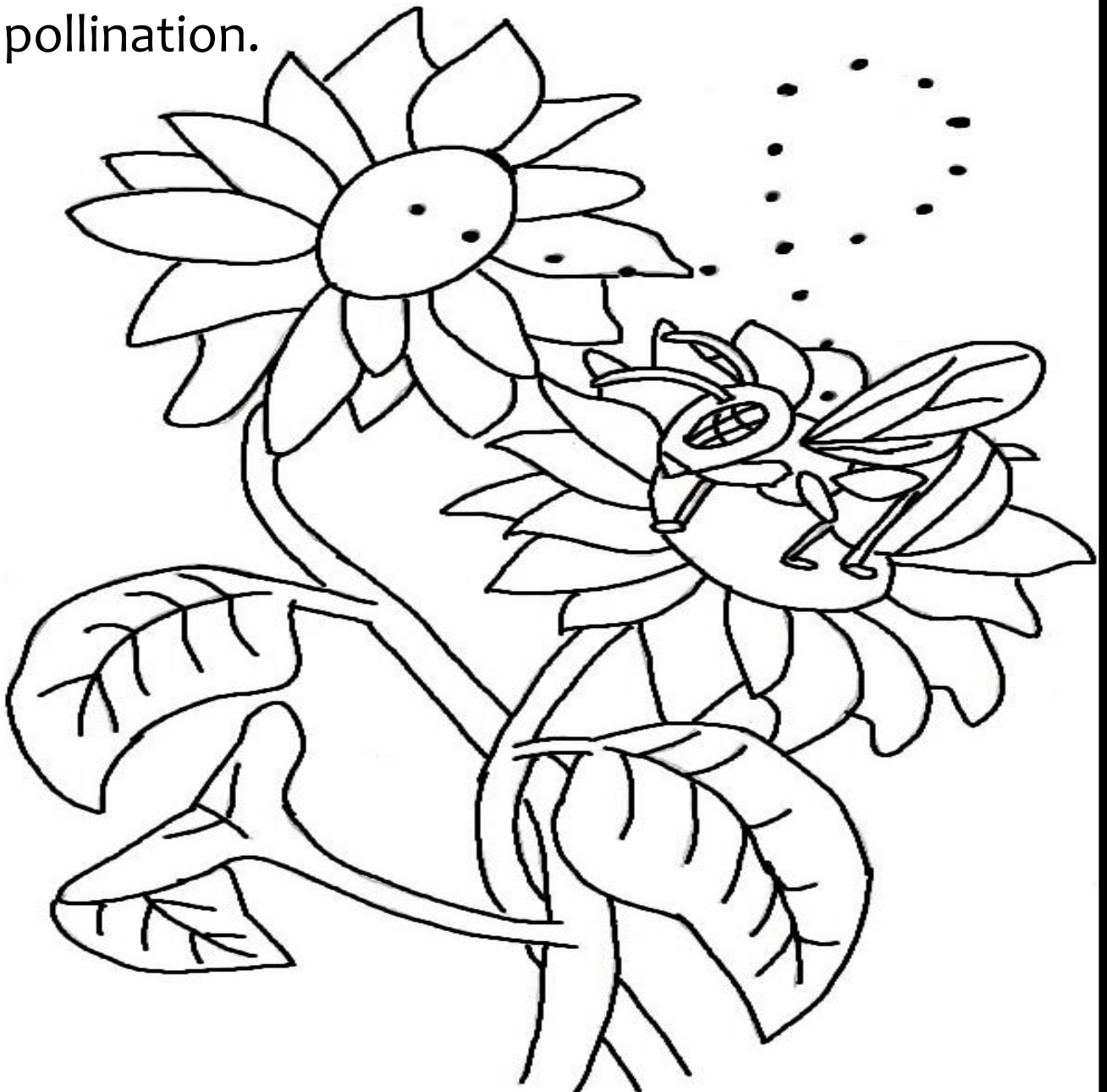
Insects are very *abundant*, and very *nutritious*. Thus many birds, reptiles, amphibians, and small mammals eat insects to stay healthy. Sometimes, humans eat them too!



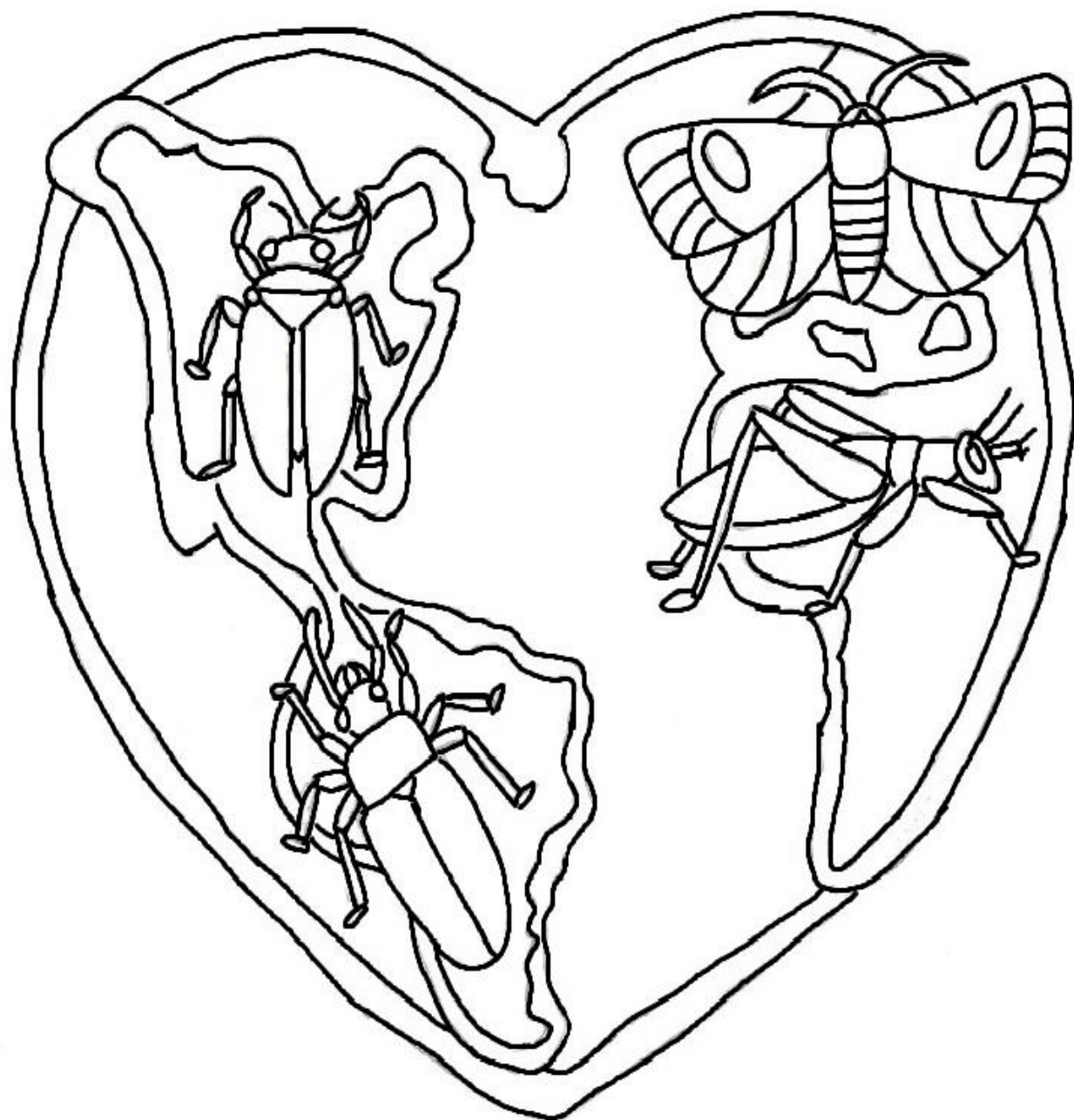
Mealworms aren't just a tasty snack for your pets, they are also a common food for people in Asia, where other meats are expensive and hard to farm.

POLLINATION

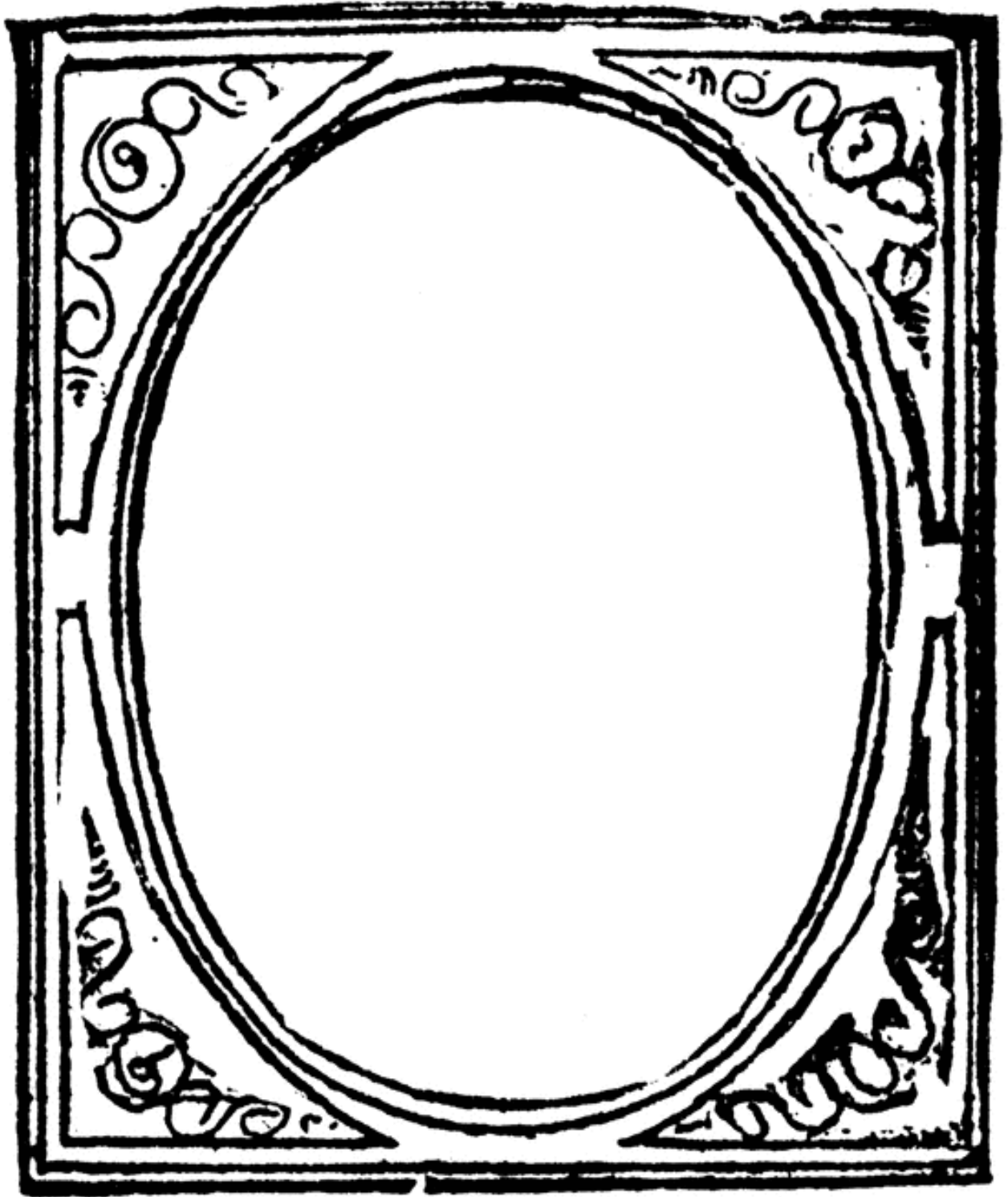
Many plants rely on insects to move their pollen from plant to plant. These insects are called ***pollinators***, and this process is called ***pollination***. Three quarters of our crops rely on insects for pollination.



Insects have very important jobs in our world. Among many things, insects help us grow food, recycle nutrients, control pests, and provide food for other animals. So instead of disliking or being afraid of bugs, love them for the big jobs they do for us, and our planet.



Your Turn!



Draw your favorite bug