

# Fireflies

by: Amy Lemons and Katie King



# About Fireflies

Fireflies can be found in a variety of habitats. You may find them in the forest, a backyard, and areas near streams or ponds.

It is most common to see fireflies where it is warm and humid. Some species of fireflies can live in water, but most live near trees and damp areas.

Antarctica is the only continent where you will not find fireflies.





# Firefly Family

Did you know that fireflies are actually beetles? Many people assume they are flies because of their name, but that is not the case! There are over 2,000 species of fireflies. You might think that all species of fireflies produce a glow, but that's simply not true.



# Harmful Play

Many people like to catch fireflies and keep them in a jar. However, it is important to release them after one or two days.

If kept in a jar for too long, fireflies may die. It is important to release the fireflies at night because that is when they are most active and able to avoid predators.

Firefly numbers are decreasing, so it is important to protect them by catching them carefully and letting them go gently.





# How Do They Glow?

Fireflies contain luciferin in their abdomens. When air rushes into their abdomen, it reacts with the luciferin and produces the glow.

The glow caused by the chemical reaction is actually called a “cold light” because it lets off hardly any heat at all.

Fireflies use their glow to communicate, warn predators, and find a mate.



# Food for Fireflies

The majority of adult fireflies live mostly on the nectar from flowers. However, there are some adult fireflies that do not eat at all. Some scientists believe that there are also adult fireflies that eat other fireflies.





# Yummy! A Snail!

Firefly larvae are carnivorous and enjoy eating snails and worms. Firefly larvae may glow. They use their glow as a defense mechanism to warn their predators that they aren't tasty. Many animals have learned to stay away from eating fireflies!



# Interesting Facts:

- Fireflies have a short life span.
  - Females lay their eggs in the ground.
    - Fireflies are nocturnal.
  - Even firefly eggs can glow!
- Some adult fireflies feed on nectar much like bees and other insects do.

