

# The Arthropod Opera

## Act I:

### 1 - Monarch Butterfly:

I am a butterfly, my name is Monarch  
Say Monarch, Monarch  
I fly with orange and black colorful wings  
They send a message, what do they mean?

Poisonous! We do not taste very good  
For as young caterpillars we ate special food  
Milkweed! To grow for metamorphosis  
Before we emerge from our chrysalis  
As adult Monarch butterflies, but not just!

Thousands of miles, we migrate, us Monarchs  
A mystery how we know where to go  
We all share the world with this beautiful order of  
Butterflies and Moths, Lepidoptera!

### 2 - Ladybird Beetle:

I am a Lady bird beetle  
You may know me as Ladybug  
I'm a beetle, quite familiar  
Red or orange with black polka dots

Shiny covers cover wings  
Elytra, showing off our colors  
Eating aphids as predators  
While helping plants, life, farms, and gardeners

Beetles shape the world over  
Number more than any order  
Of insect, we're the most diverse  
The beetles, Coleoptera!

### 3 - Little Black Ant:

We are the ants, and we march,  
march, march  
A colony of ants, and we march,  
march, march  
Searching for some food, we march in a line  
A social insect group, of Hymenoptera  
Found around the world, and we march, march, march  
On nearly every bit of land, we march, march, march

We have a queen, and we have some workers too  
Even winged adults who fly, to start colonies new  
We clean the ground and decompose, to help the world to live and grow  
We even plant a lot of seeds, as we march from sea to sea

Diverse and highly specialized  
Our colonies often comprise  
Of thousands upon thousands of  
Marching Hymenoptera!

### 4 - House Fly:

I am a fly, and yes I fly!  
We're special, and I'll tell you why  
An insect, related to all the rest  
With wings and halteres to fly the best!

But when we're seen on something rotten  
Our brilliance is fast forgotten  
Flies support a healthy world  
In fact, we're quite exceptional

We decompose what's left of animals  
And are eaten, so it goes!  
We metamorphose, first eggs are laid

Once hatched, they're adults in about 10 days!

We pollinate, and help get food on your plate

Like chocolate? Thank the midge fly, both are great!

We specialize, there's many different flies

Diverse and global, worldwide

A truly exceptional Arthropod  
Hurrah for humble Diptera!

### 5 - Orb Web Spider:

I am a spider, and I spin a silken web to  
Capture flying Insects, and then eat them, yum yum!  
An Orb web spider, with a spiral, shimmering web  
I eat it everyday, and then rebuild my home

Spiders, Scorpions, Ticks, Mites  
Arachnids, similar, alike  
Essential for a healthy world  
Arachnids, special Arthropods

Spiders are a predator, with fangs to help deliver  
Venom to our prey, a special protein mixture  
Just a small amount to help us eat our dinner  
And often times we find ourselves  
A tasty meal for something else!

Arachnids, Insects, Arthropods  
We share this world together  
Predator and prey  
Eat and eaten, Araneae!

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## Act II:

### 6 - Honey Bee:

I am a Honey Bee  
Many bees look much like me  
Yellow and black patterns showing  
Off our colorful bright warning

We build hives in cavities  
Often times we're found in trees  
A social group, like Ants and Wasps  
And Termites, all these Arthropods

Honey bees live in large groups  
But most bees have a smaller troop  
Bumble bees and many others  
Are native bees, here long before us

Our queen sends messages through  
smells  
Workers forage, out by themselves  
Then share the knowledge with familial  
bees  
Through waggle dances, in hives with  
ease

A fast dance, near, a long dance, far  
Direction based on the sun, our star  
A strong dance, great, a weak dance,  
fine  
Dancing to communicate, sublime!

### 7 - Pollination:

We are the pollinators  
We help plants to reproduce  
Life evolved together slowly  
Native plants and animals show

Connections, we visit flowers and feed  
Pollinating naturally  
The plants and animals need each  
other  
Food for one, new life the other

Who pollinates all around the Earth?  
About one in three fruits and  
vegetables  
Butterflies, bees, mosquitoes, midges,  
and more  
Arthropods pollinate around the world!

### 8 - Predator and Prey:

We are predator and prey  
Depending on the day  
Everything in balance and connected  
As our global food webs say

Some days we catch food and feast  
Other days, we're a meal to be  
Insects, arachnids, these Arthropods  
Important food for life, near and far

Some are masters spinning webs  
Or hunting with venom and  
appendages  
Predators help our nature thrive  
By eating, shaping groups of life  
Spiders, ants, and beetles seeking  
Flies are often found retreating  
Necessary all around the globe  
The food web of life, and Arthropods

### 9 - Decomposers:

We are the decomposers  
Many of us may look familiar  
Ants, beetles, flies all looking  
For something juicy, something rotten

We are fed, and in turn clean  
Our home, nature, of many things  
Without us it'd be quite a mess  
Of passed on life and carcasses

An important job, unseen by most  
But critical for new plant growth  
Nutrients returned to soil  
Fertilized, a nice plant meal

From something dead comes life anew  
Around the Earth, it's what we do  
Decomposers helping everyday  
And Arthropods help lead the way!

### 10 - Diversity and Ecosystem Strength:

We are all important, everyone of you  
We each will shape the world in a  
special way, it's true  
All of life evolves together, everything  
on Earth connected  
Arthropods and people, all essential,  
life must be respected

Insects, Arachnids, Myriapods,  
Crustaceans, this group called  
Arthropods  
Are each unique, but also share, a list  
of things all similar  
An exoskeleton, jointed legs, we moult  
to grow and shed our skin  
Compound eyes, with many facets,  
over five hundred million years we've  
been at it

Diversity brings strength to all, it's not  
just for us Arthropods  
New ideas make the world strong,  
helps society grow, helps us all belong  
Diversity brings strength to all, you're a  
part of this world, and opera!  
Predators and prey, pollinators,  
decomposers, the Arthropod  
ambassadors!  
Arthropods!  
Arthropods!  
Arthropods!