



# Starved Rock Saplings

Thank you for your interest in Starved Rock State Park. The following Starved Rock Sapling seasonal program is to help engage children and families in nature; at home, in their neighborhood, or at Starved Rock and Matthiessen State Parks.

Each packet will be posted to the Starved Rock and Matthiessen State Park Facebook page every October, January, April, and July. Packets can also be downloaded from the IDNR website at [www2.illinois.gov/dnr/parks/pages/StarvedRock.aspx](http://www2.illinois.gov/dnr/parks/pages/StarvedRock.aspx) under the Interpretive tab.

Packets will include the following:

## **DISCOVER:**

fun facts and information about the natural world.

## **CONNECT:**

nature activities, storybook suggestions, games, and crafts .

## **EXPLORE:**

ideas for getting outdoors and exploring the natural world in your backyard, neighborhood, or community parks.



**Summer Edition**

**Starved Rock and Matthiessen State Parks**

[www2.illinois.gov/dnr](http://www2.illinois.gov/dnr)



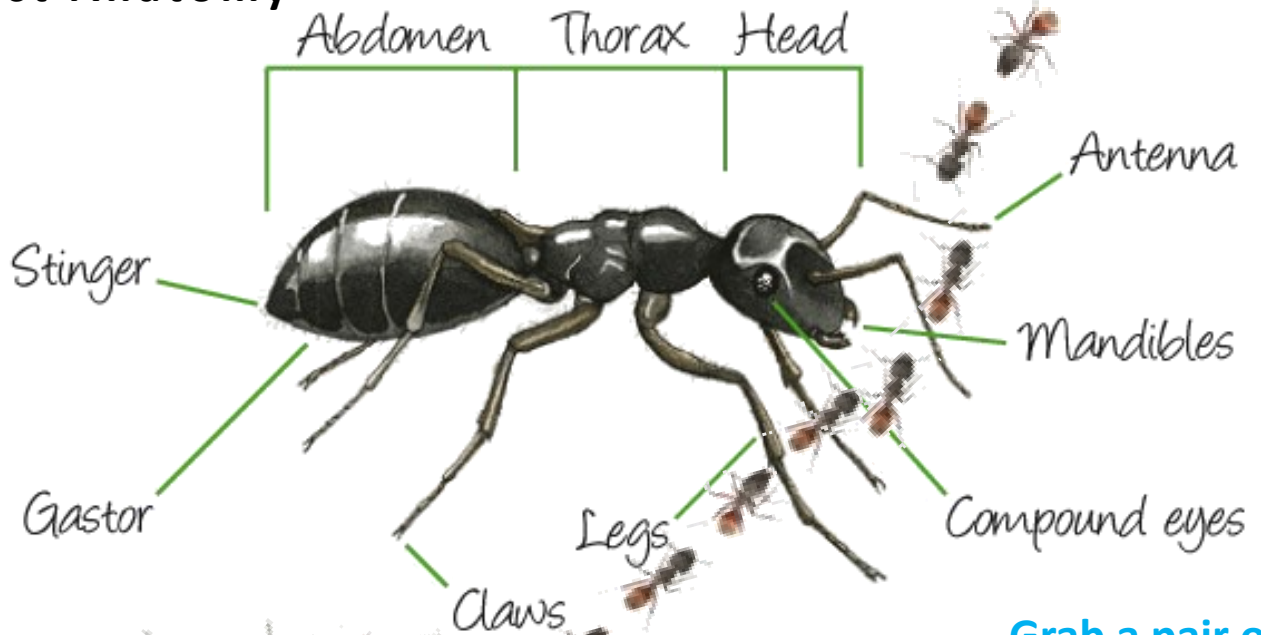
Starved Rock and Matthiessen State Parks

**By Lisa Sons, Natural Resource Coordinator**



# DISCOVER

## Insect Anatomy



Grab a pair of kaleidoscope glasses at your local store and view the world through the compound eyes of an insect!



Insects have 3 main body parts: head, thorax (back), abdomen (stomach), and 6 legs!  
Try this fun song with motions at home with family and friends!

### Head, Thorax, Abdomen

(To the tune of "Head, Shoulders, Knees & Toes")\*

Head, tho-rax, ab-do-men, ab-do-men  
Head, tho-rax, ab-do-men, ab-do-men-eh-eh-en  
Six legs, some wings, and an ex-o-skel-eton  
Head, tho-rax, ab-do-men, ab-do-men

Head, tho-rax, ab-do-men, ab-do-men  
Head, tho-rax, ab-do-men, ab-do-men-eh-eh-en  
Big eyes, small size, and two an-ten-nae, too  
Head, tho-rax, ab-do-men, ab-do-men

As you sing, point to the following body parts:

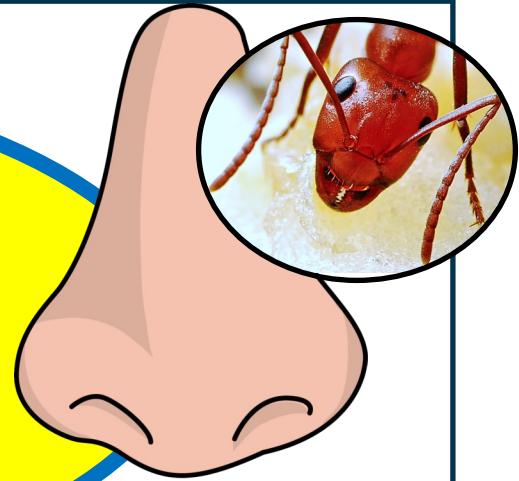
head, thorax (point to chest), abdomen (point to stomach)  
legs, wings (point over shoulders), exoskeleton (arms over head, then sweeping motion down toward feet)

big eyes (hold hands as if looking through binoculars),  
small size (hold out thumb and pointer finger to indicate small size), feelers (wiggle pointer fingers above ears)

## Insect Behavior

We use our noses to smell, but what do insects use?  
Do they even have noses?

Insects like the Ant use their antennae to smell!  
That's right those funny looking things growing off  
the top of their heads help them pick up smells left  
by other ants on the ground and even food.



Colonies are large social groups of ants.  
Ant hills are the above ground openings to the  
many chambers and passageways of the larger  
colony below ground.



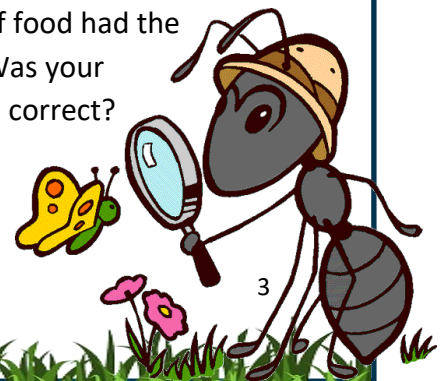
## Head outside and observe ants in action!

### Materials:

- Magnifying lense
- Paper plate divided into four sections with a marker.
- Ant food: fruit, bread, cheese, or grass.

### Observations:

1. Which food do you think the ants will like the most? Which do you think they will like the least?
2. Head outside in search of ants! Look along sidewalk cracks, trees, or for ant hills above ground.
3. Place the plate of food next to the ants that you have found.
4. Wait and observe. Watch how the ants move and behave.
5. Did their behavior or movement change once they found the food? How?
6. Count how many ants came to each type of food on your plate.
7. Which type of food had the most ants? Was your original guess correct?



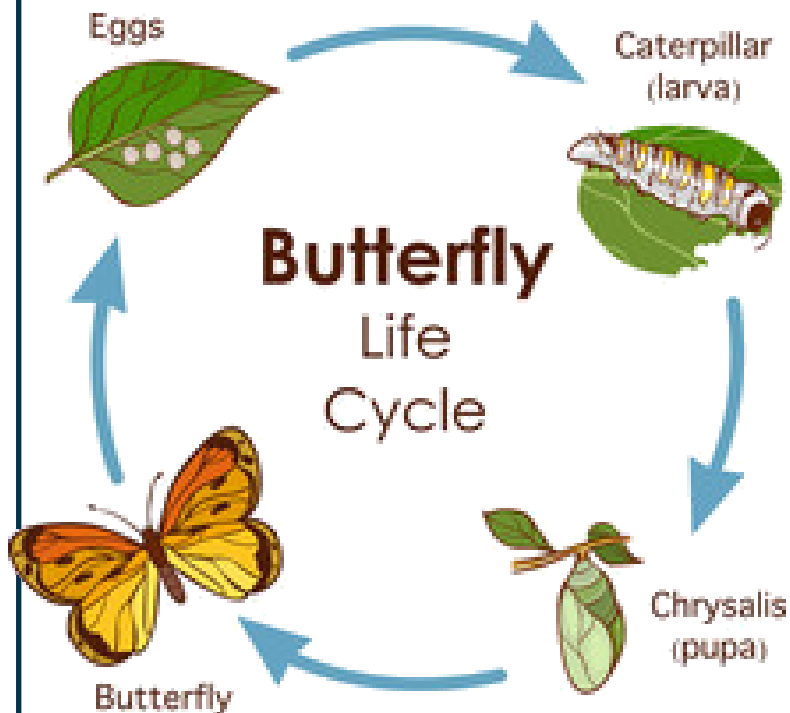
# CONNECT



## What is Metamorphosis?

### Metamorphosis Yoga

*Insects have 4 different stages of growth and the entire cycle from egg to adult is called Metamorphosis.*



Curl up like an egg.



Crawl like a caterpillar.



Be as still as a chrysalis.



Spread your wings like a butterfly.



Spring-type clothespin  
 Paint or paint markers  
 Wiggle Eyes  
 Short Chenille Stick  
 Glue or glue dots  
 Sandwich bag  
 Snack:

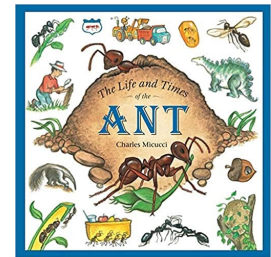
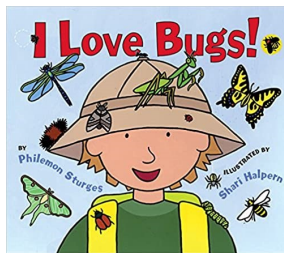
Trail Mix	Grapes
Crackers	Pretzels
Granola	Cereal

## Butterfly Snack Bags

# What to do!

1. Paint the Clothespin.
2. Glue on wiggle eyes.
3. Cut a piece of chenille stick in half to make the antennae.
4. Glue the antennae to the clothespin.
5. Fill the sandwich bag with snacks.
6. Twist the bag in the middle.
7. Clip the clothespin in the middle.

## Nature Reads!



- *I Love Bugs*, by Philemon Sturges.
- *Evelyn the Adventurous Entomologist*, by Christine Evans
- *The Life and Times of the Ant*, by Charles Micucci

Resources for  
 Parents and  
 Young  
 Naturalists!

Don't forget you can rent out our IDNR EDUCATIONAL TRUNKS for FREE! Just ask by emailing [DNR.StarvedRock@illinois.gov](mailto:DNR.StarvedRock@illinois.gov)

- <https://dnr.illinois.gov/education.html>
- <https://kids.nationalgeographic.com/animals/invertebrates/topic/insects>
- <https://www.bugfacts.net/>

# EXPLORE

## NATURE HIKE

- Explore your backyard, neighborhood, community parks, or Starved Rock and Matthiessen State Parks with a fun scavenger hunt this fall. Don't forget to "LEAVE NO TRACE" by leaving only footprints and taking only memories when visiting a park.

**THE GREAT**  
*creepy-crawly*  
♀  
**BUG HUNT**



LADYBUG

ANT

GRASSHOPPER

BUTTERFLY

BEE

SNAIL

DRAGONFLY

CATERPILLAR

BEETLE

WORM

MOTH

SLUG

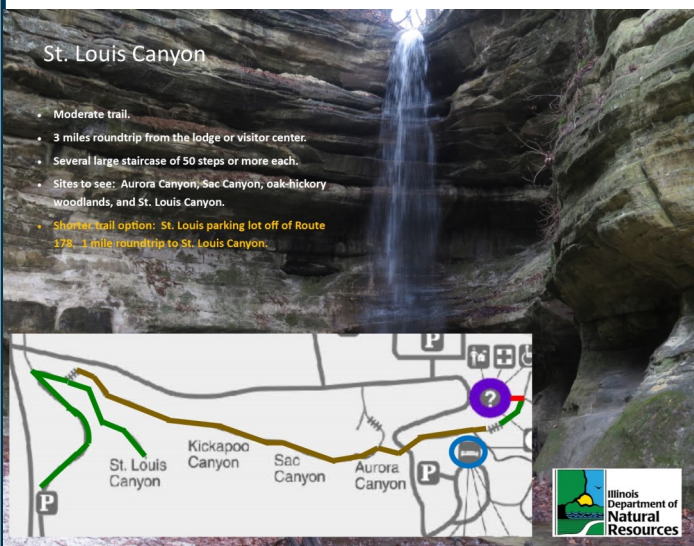
SPIDER

FLY

ROLY-POLY

## EXPLORE YOUR STATE PARKS!

Visit [www2.illinois.gov/dnr](http://www2.illinois.gov/dnr) to view state parks by region under the Parks and Recreation tab. What state parks are close to your home? Help your family plan a visit by exploring the parks webpage. What does your local state park have to offer; hiking, biking, horseback riding, camping, fishing, skiing, or boating? Read over the trail maps, trail suggestions, rules and regulations (stay on marked trails), and head out to explore. Here are some recommended trails for families at Starved Rock State Park. Happy Hikers=Happy Trails!



### St. Louis Canyon

- Moderate trail.
- 3 miles roundtrip from the lodge or visitor center.
- Several large staircase of 50 steps or more each.
- Sites to see: Aurora Canyon, Sac Canyon, oak-hickory woodlands, and St. Louis Canyon.
- **Starved trail option:** St. Louis parking lot off of Route 178. 1 mile roundtrip to St. Louis Canyon.



### Starved Rock and French Canyon

- Easy to moderate trail.
- .8 miles roundtrip from the lodge or visitor center.
- Large staircase of 65 steps to top of Starved Rock.
- Smaller staircase from French Canyon to lodge parking lot.
- Uneven stone steps and stone footholds to canyon entrance.

Great trek for families with little ones if you park off of route 178 at the St. Louis parking lot just south of the park's west entrance and hike into St. Louis Canyon.

The most convenient hike at the park starting from the main parking lot by the river and visitor center leading to the park's namesake Starved Rock and French Canyon. French Canyon is not recommended for children under age 5 or anyone in winter when the ground is snow and ice covered.



### Illinois, Ottawa, and Kaskaskia Canyons

- Easy to Moderate trail.
- 1 mile roundtrip from Illinois Canyon parking to Illinois Canyon. 1 mile roundtrip from Ottawa Canyon parking lot to Ottawa and Kaskaskia Canyons.
- Natural trails of rock, sand, dirt, and tree roots.
- Several creek crossings in spring.
- Sites to see: Council Overhang, Kaskaskia Canyon, and Ottawa Canyon.

The eastern canyons of Illinois, Ottawa, and Kaskaskia are great for families due to their length and proximity to parking lots. Just one mile roundtrip hikes into the canyons. Be aware the trails are not paved and you will have a few small creek crossings in spring and early summer.