



## The glowworm

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Flying flowers have arrived along with the spring showers. Swallowtails and sulphurs are in abundance and a few folks have already reported seeing a monarch. So, we might even officially say, spring is sprung and it's time to go looking for those early season critters. May-June beetles are flying to lights at night and the ever present crane flies are also around. Even though north Mississippi had snow flurries during the first week in April, flowers seem to really be ready to green up and grow like crazy.

We're going to look at some different critters this year – so if you've got one you're really interested in contact the *gloworm* and we'll see if we can feature it.

Most avid collectors manage to get a giant water bug in their collection. Then non-collectors mistake it for large cockroaches or just say “wow, what's that?”

**Giant Water Bug** is a member of the family Belostomatidae. The largest true bugs, these



common brown insects are 1-2 3/8" (25-60 mm). Their hind legs are flattened for swimming. The fore legs grasp prey while the insect thrusts its powerful, sucking beak into a victim. To obtain air, giant water bugs raise the tip of the abdomen to the water surface and extend 2 tail-like

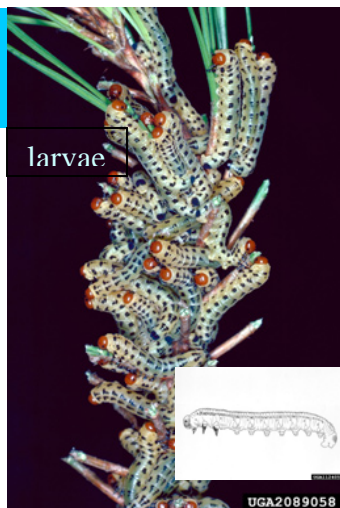
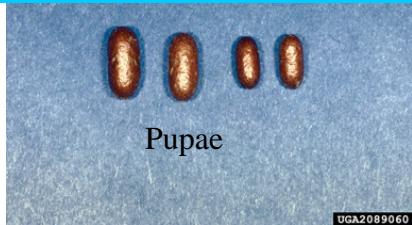
breathing tubes. The larger species lay their eggs on water plants, whereas in the smaller species large batches of eggs are cemented to the back of the males, who carry them about and aerate them until they hatch. They are mostly nocturnal hiding among floating vegetation on muddy bottoms. There is usually one generation per year they feed on tadpoles, small fish and other insects. These large critters can wield a powerful bite if mishandled. They commonly come to lights in the summer. I have seen more of these critters in the delta of Mississippi than in other areas. **From enature.com**

In recent times, I have heard a number of stories about Daddy Long Legs. One legend says they are the most poisonous critters alive and that a bite can kill. They aren't and they can't! I included them because we always see them in abundance when we are out collecting.

**Harvestman – Daddy Long legs** are members of the family Phalangidae. They are the only spider with a single body part having the head, thorax and abdomen all fused into one. Members of this family have 4 pairs of extremely long, slender legs. Most are 1/8-1/2" (4-12 mm) long. The second pair of legs is longer than the others, and is used like antennae. Sometimes legs may be missing because they break off easily and cannot be regenerated. Adults are frequently seen in huge gatherings, standing with legs interlaced. They prey on small insects and feed on soft, decaying organic matter. Several legends indicate these critters are extremely poisonous, but they in fact are non-venomous. **From enature.com.**



**Redheaded pine sawfly**  
Photos by L.L. Hyche, Auburn



Many 4-Hers have heard of sawflies, but never knew what one looked like. The Redheaded Pine Sawfly is a pest of pine forests. It's in the order Hymenoptera. The adults look wasp like, but the larvae usually look like Lepidoptera. We do not see many of these in 4-H collections. So here's a challenge, maybe we can find a special prize for those 4-Hers who are able to add sawflies to their collection this spring. Any takers?

Happy Buggin'

Michael R. Williams  
Extension Entomologist

I've not requested a mail list upgrade on the *Gloworm* in quite some time but would really appreciate having any upgrades in addresses. I try to mail this to anybody who wants it, but some of the young people who received it in the past may have a new address – college. If that situation exists for your household, we'll keep sending it to you, but upgrade the new address, as well. We'll send it to both places. Just return this page with the new address:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

You can email your address to me at [MikeW@ext.msstate.edu](mailto:MikeW@ext.msstate.edu)

**Linnaean Games Questions:** The 4-H Entomology Linnaean Games Questions for 2004 are available for team study. All Mississippi Linnaean Game Contests, including the Mid-South Fair will come from the questions in the booklet. The questions can be accessed at:

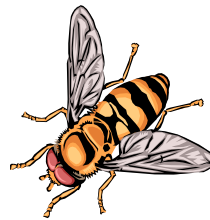
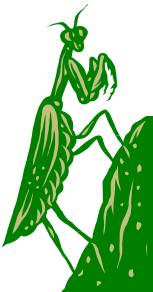
<http://www.msstate.edu/Entomology/4-H/LINNAEAN.html>

Remember, ALL 4-H Linnaean contests will be taken from the questions in the official booklet, but for a team to qualify they must submit 25 new questions (derived from 4-H entomology material) before the contest. We'll use the questions submitted to augment the 2005 contests. The time to get your team going is NOW. County contests should be conducted in May to get the best teams of 4. We'll see you at the Games in June!

We still have plenty of openings for both camps, but are receiving registrations right along, so get yours in now so you can be assured of a place. The application is included in this mailing.

We are reworking our 4-H Entomology WEB Page, so look it over and let us know what you think.

[http://msucares.com/4h\\_Youth/4hentomology/index.html](http://msucares.com/4h_Youth/4hentomology/index.html)



Which of these is not a beneficial insect?

