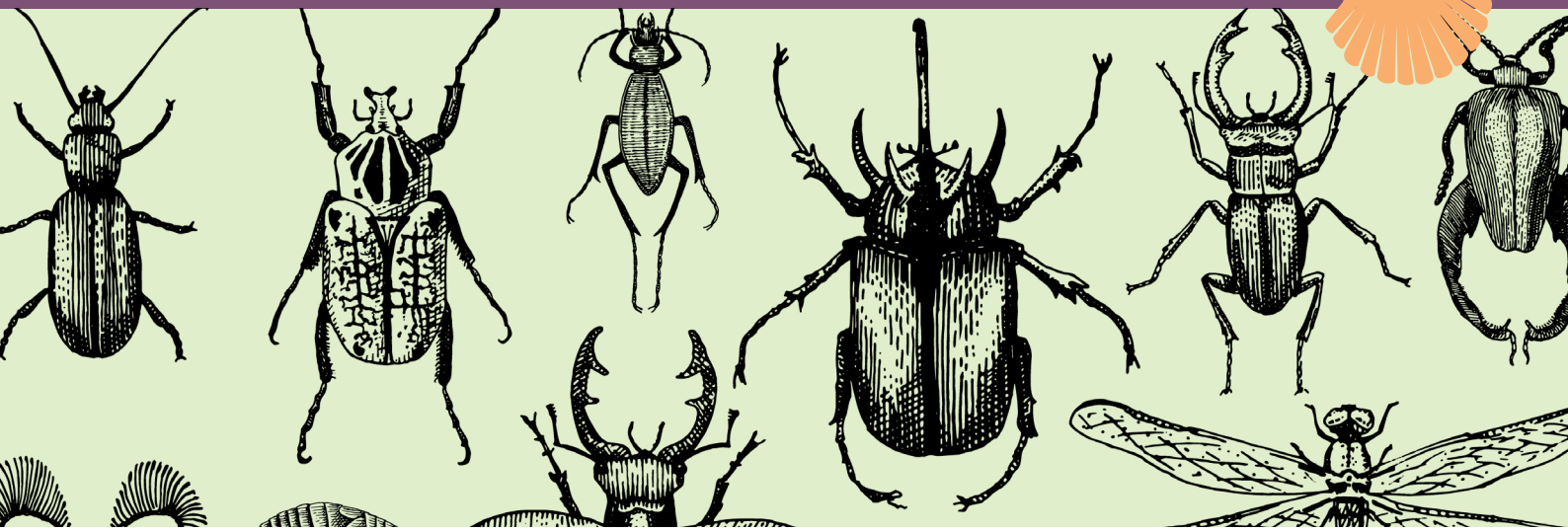
Species and Symmetry



Wide eyed and curious

KLAs: Science	LESSON TOPIC: Classifying animals, biological illustration & symmetry in nature
YEAR LEVEL: K-10	DURATION OF ACTIVITY: 45-50 minutes

In this activity, we immerse ourselves in natural history and explore the distinctive features of animals that are used to group and identify living things. We use specimens in our Natural History Museum to help explain relationships between species and use a dichotomous key to identify specimens.

This activity unlocks the study of nature in three key ways:

- Close observation of the similarities and differences between species. Use a dichotomous key to classify animals into taxonomic groups;
- Creative documentation of these species through pencil illustration. Draw one of the animals and explore why it is unique from the others; and
- Seeing and understanding symmetry. Explore patterns and shapes of animals that give us insight into their development and evolution in nature.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will:

- Appreciate why museum collections are important as a scientific resource, why we collect organisms, and what they can tell us.
- Develop their skills in using dichotomous keys, classifying groups of organisms using defining features
- Learn how to split up major groups of arthropods based on morphology.
- Understand biological symmetry and identify it in nature.

EXPLORATORY AND PLAY-BASED COMPONENTS

This activity combines curiosity with creativity in the context of natural history and observation. Students will have an opportunity to consider different kinds of arthropods, and play with ideas around defining features and taxonomy. They have autonomy in choosing a specimen on which to focus their illustrations, and will be challenged to capture the detail of that animal. Their chosen arthropod, and other specimens on display in the museum, will be used in a game of comparison to explore biological symmetry.

Curious? Learn more at **unediscoveryvoyager.org.au**

NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM

une University of New England

Discovery