



Dear Rising 7th Grade Students and Parents,

As in previous years, rising 7th grade students will be required to create a nature collection for their Life Science class. I am sending out this information now so that students can get started on their collections over the summer, since this is the best time to find bugs and leaves. The collection will be due on August 25, 2026. Students may bring in their collection as early as August 19th (Open House/School Supply Drop off) if they would like. **This project will count as two test grades.**

Students have two collections to complete. Collection 1, students will collect fifteen different insects as specified in the included directions. Collection 2, students will collect fifteen different tree leaves. They have the option to gather an additional 5 more for either / both collections for additional credit. **This entire project will need to come COMPLETED to school** by August 25, 2026. *We will not be working on them at school.* There will be a week for them to ask me questions should they need additional guidance. I will also be available by email over the summer, should you run into any issues or have questions. **Five Bonus Points will be given to students who turn in their projects prior to August 25th.**
mthorne@gcswarriors.org

Collection #1 Insects: Students will collect 15 insects. They must have 5 different orders of the following orders and no more than 3 different insect specimens from an order:

- Coleoptera (beetles)
- Diptera (flies, mosquitoes, gnats)
- Lepidoptera (moths, butterflies)
- Orthoptera (grasshoppers, crickets, katydids)
- Hymenoptera (ants, bees, wasps)
- Odonata (dragonflies, damselflies)
- Hemiptera (stink bugs, cicadas, leafhoppers, scale insects)

Students will need to keep track of each bug with the **common name**, **location at which the bug was found** and **date the bug was found**. At least 10 of the 15 need to be identified with **Scientific Name**. The scientific name can be difficult for some species, due to the wide variety in the family. **Please note that adult insects have six legs; spiders do not qualify.

Collection #2 Leaves – Students will collect 15 tree leaf specimens (a bush is not a tree). Students will be required to keep track of the **date** and **location** found for each leaf. They will create labels for these with the **common name**, **scientific name**, **location the leaf was found**, **date leaf was found** and category of leaf blade type (either compound leaf or simple leaf). * Compound leaves should have all leaflets.



The two collections will be completed neatly and with correct identification of the specimens. Mounting the leaves and bugs must be done at home. The identification must also be labeled and completed at home. The students can use a variety of identification field guides either in book form, website(s), google lens and other resources. It is much easier to identify these in this day and age, with some exceptions!

Collecting/Presentation –

Attached is information, which explains the proper method of killing and pinning insects. Do not leave insects in the killing jar long after they are dead; they will begin to mold or fall apart. Take them out of the killing jar. For large insect specimens, pin them immediately after removing them from the jar. For small specimens, glue and mount them. This way the insects can dry before molding. The specimens need to be identified by the location and date of their collection.

Leaves should be pressed between the pages of a book until dry and stiff (reference the leaf collection guide page), then glued onto thick paper which can then be slipped into a loose-leaf protector page and put into a notebook, or “laminated” with packing tape onto cardstock. (Reference the leaf collection guide) Magnetic-type photo albums also work well for this purpose. The common names, location and date found should be recorded where the student is able to identify them. Labels must be done prior to returning to class. I hope the nature collection will be a good learning experience for the students, as well as an enjoyable one. Please do not do the project for your child! I look forward to working with each of the students as we learn about our wonderful God and His marvelous creation.

Please don't go to HUGE expense for the final mounting boxes (insects) or books/ binding for the leaves. Use what you have already available to you at home. I have listed options in the information packet.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Thorne

Mrs. Thorne
7th Grade Life Science Teacher
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