



## Compost Critters Activity

### Background:

Insects are important decomposers and are helpful in removing waste, moving nutrients and aerating, and even fertilizing (through their poop!) the soil. This activity encourages children to examine and discover what arthropods live in compost and/or soil.

### Objectives:

- Identify common arthropods found in compost and/or dirt.
- Define the importance of arthropods living in in compost/soil and how they help move nutrients, aerate or fertilize the soil, or remove waste in the environment.

### Instructions:

1. Before your event, collect compost/soil samples from outdoors (backyard, school, UNL, etc.) in bags and take them, along with the Compost Critters kit, to your event.
2. On day of the event, spread the soil/compost in large container, on the pavement, or on a table and let students dig through with plastic tools to see what arthropods they find.
3. Have students collect arthropods in plastic insect containers and consult the ID sheets to see what they have found
4. Ask students why they think arthropods are important in the soil/compost environment.



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