

Virtual Firefly Festival Lesson: Firefly Anatomy

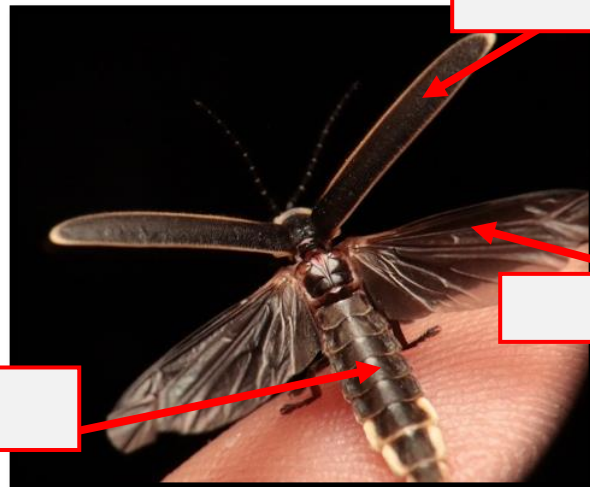
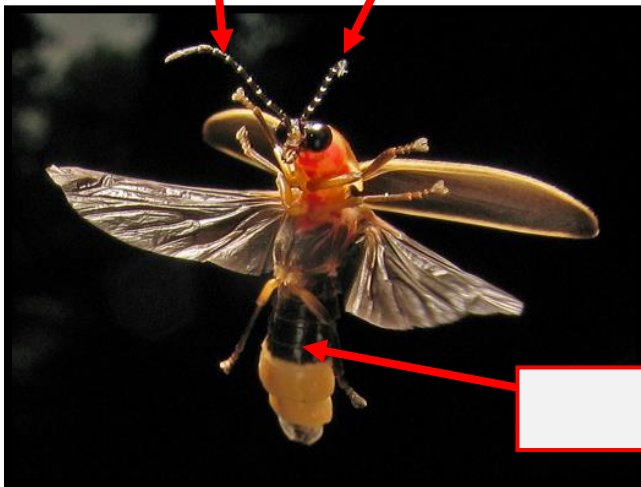
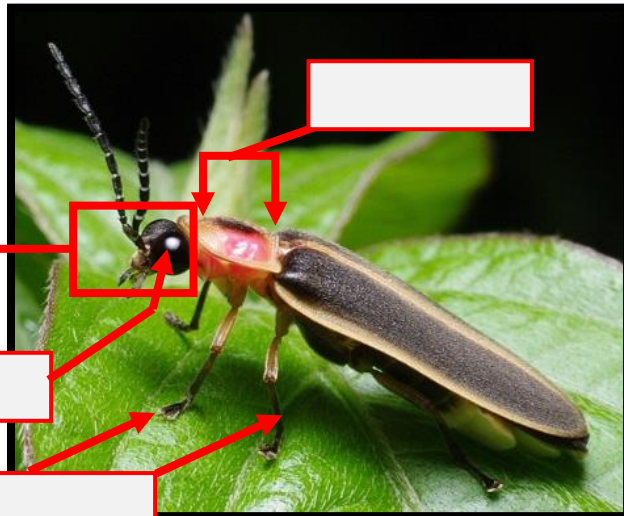
In this lesson, participants will learn basic firefly anatomy and can practice labeling fireflies.

Fireflies are classified in Family *Lampyridae* of insects, which already tells you a lot about their anatomy if you know what to look for! When you hear the word “**insect**”, you should automatically think 6 legs and 3 body parts; this rule helps you separate insects from similar animals like spiders, which have 8 legs and 2 body parts. When we talk about body parts, we mean that they have a **head** (with eyes, antennae, and their mouthparts), then a **thorax** (where all 6 legs and wings attach), and finally an **abdomen** (usually the largest segment, where most of their organs are). Fireflies are in the order *Coleoptera*, which means they are beetles that have 2 pairs of **wings**: the set they use to fly are covered by the other pair, which have evolved to become hard covers, called elytra! The iconic light that gives fireflies their name is produced by a special section at the end of their abdomen where they combine chemicals and oxygen inside their bodies (read more about that in the Virtual Firefly Festival Lesson: Bioluminescence!)

Can you label these images with the firefly’s body parts? Here’s a word bank!

Head
Antennae
Wings
Wing Cover
Legs
Thorax
Eyes
Abdomen

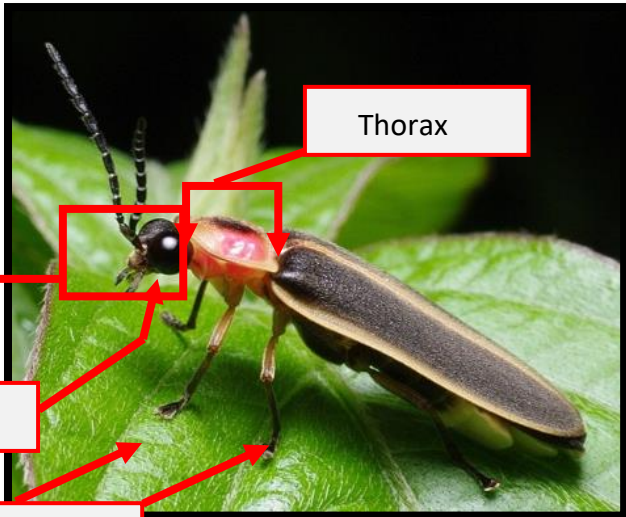
Scroll to Page 2 for the answers!



Discussion + Home Exploration: For more info about insects, [check out this video](#)

- How are fireflies like other insects? How are they different, even from other beetles?
- Do you have any similar body parts to a firefly?
- Can you see fireflies around where you live? What other kinds of insects can you find?

Answer Key

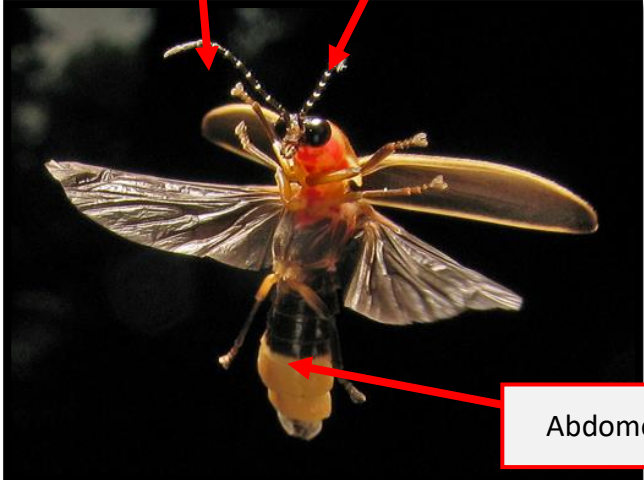


Head

Thorax

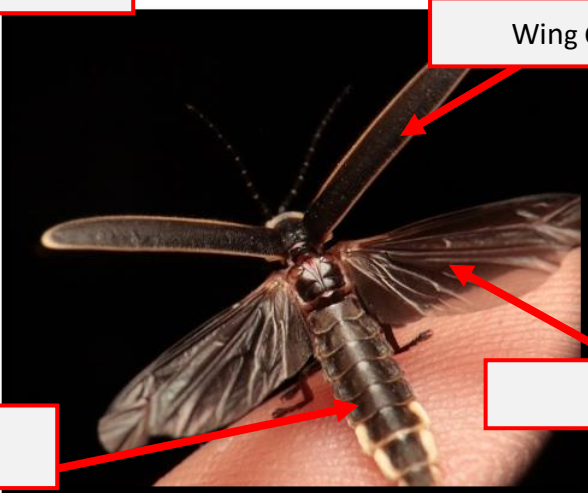
Eyes

Legs



Antennae

Abdomen



Wing Covers

Wings