

Phylum Arthropoda

PHOTO ESSAY



MICHAEL MCCANN
Milkweed longhorn beetle



BECCA WOOD
Above: Crab spider

RON BOGGS
Below: Red tachinid fly

STRANGE AS IT MIGHT SEEM, some of the most beautiful animals that live in Montana are multi-legged beetles, moths, spiders, and other members of the phylum Arthropoda.

Arthropods come in a spectrum of colors, including bright yellows, shimmering blues, and metallic greens. These small creatures use color to warn predators that they are poisonous. Color also works as camouflage, such as when an orange butterfly folds its wings to reveal drab undersides (tricking a bird searching for the vivid specimen it saw moments earlier). Color allows some arthropods to mimic bad-tasting species. Many use color to advertise their sex and species to potential mates.

This remarkable world goes on around us at all times, largely unseen. About the only way to witness its beauty is through a photographer's macro lens, which fills the frame with a tiny creature's entire body. Equally important to producing striking images like those shown here is the background, which a photographer can use to create contrast that heightens the subject's shape, complexity, and color.

Readers of this magazine regularly see stunning images of elk, grizzlies, and trout. Here and on the following pages are some of Montana's other spectacular wildlife.

—Editor



JOHN WINNIE, JR.
Golden flower longhorn beetle
on a wild mountain rose



Clockwise from above:

BECCA WOOD
Common horse fly

JEREMY ROBERTS
White-crossed seed bug

JAIME & LISA JOHNSON
Jumping spider





Clockwise from facing page:

JAIME AND LISA JOHNSON
Damselfly

RON BOGGS
Cecropia moth caterpillar

JOHN ASHLEY
Satyr angelwing butterfly

MICHAEL MCCANN
Toothpick grasshopper

