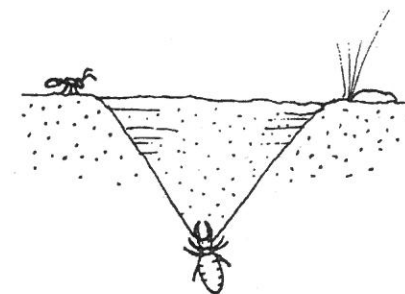
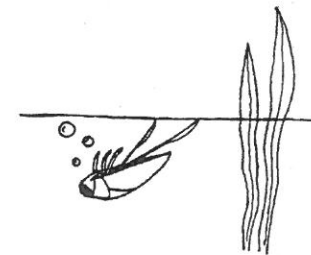
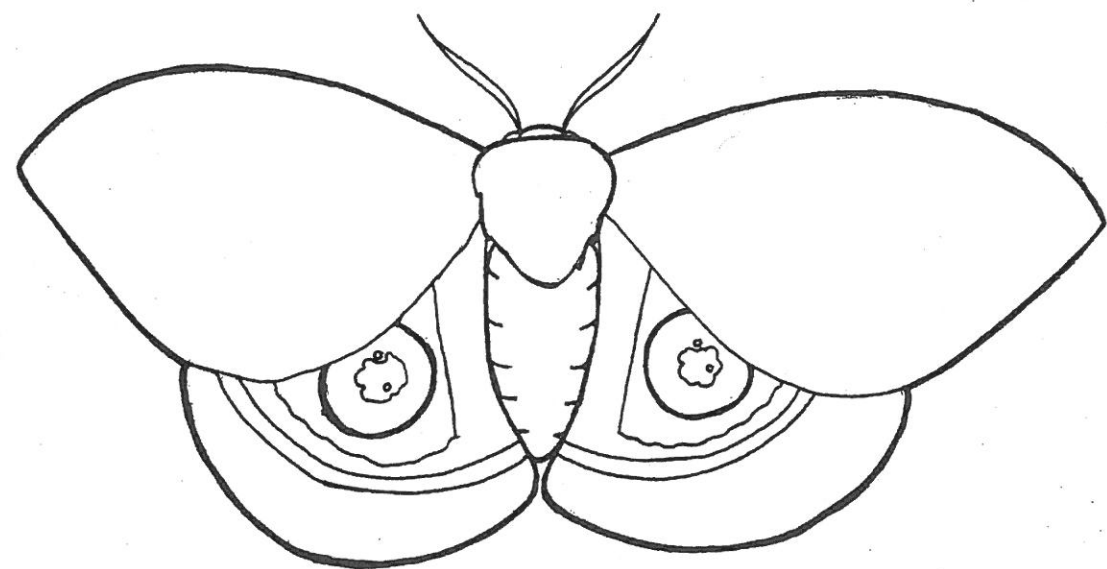


Interesting

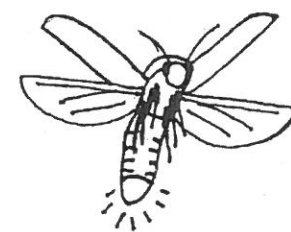
Insects



A

to

Z



Interesting Insects:

A to Z

Illustrations by Matt Bertone

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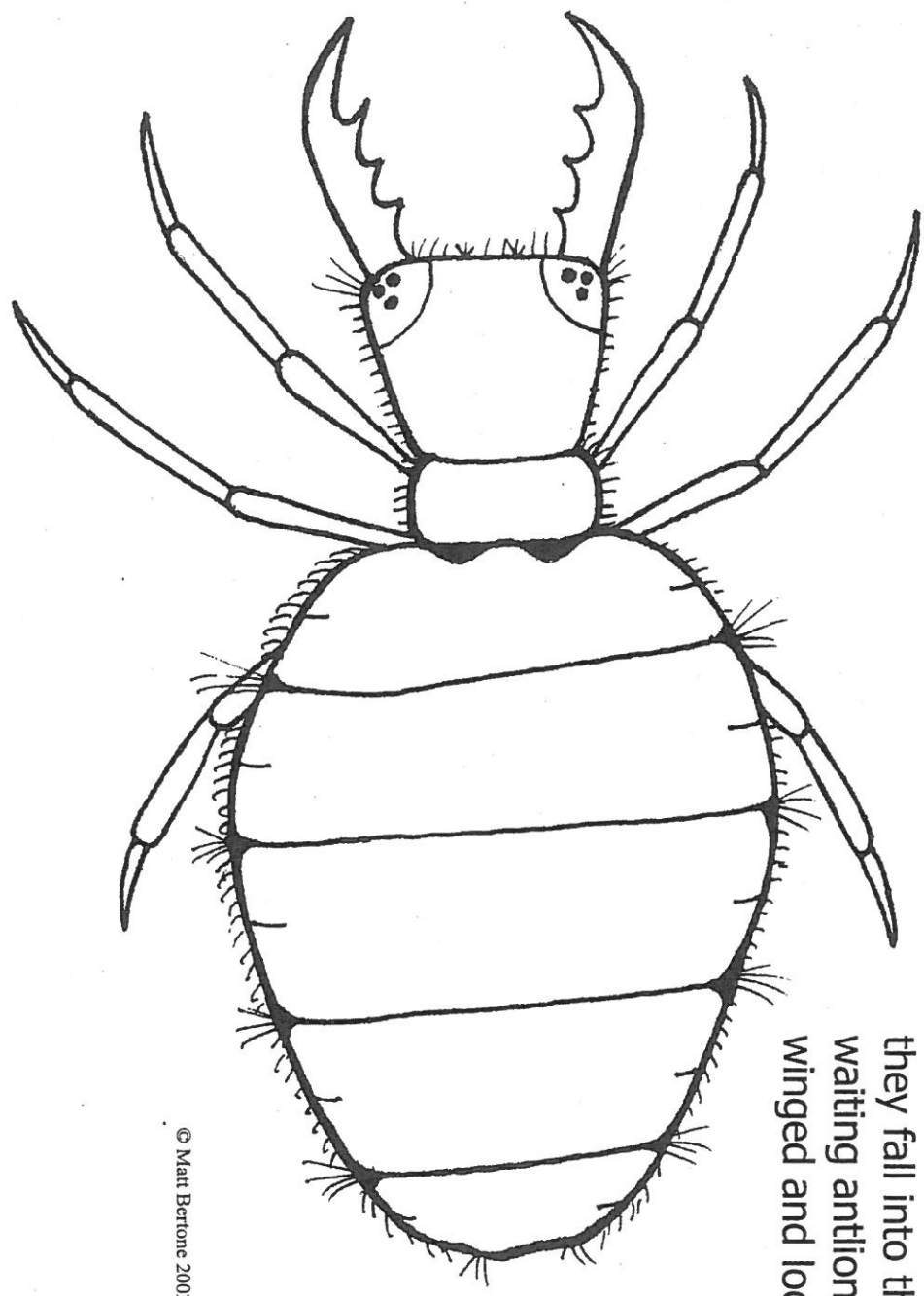
Molly Puente

Nicole Benda

Entomology Graduate Student
Association

2002

*Note: Words in **bold print** are found in the glossary at the back of the book.



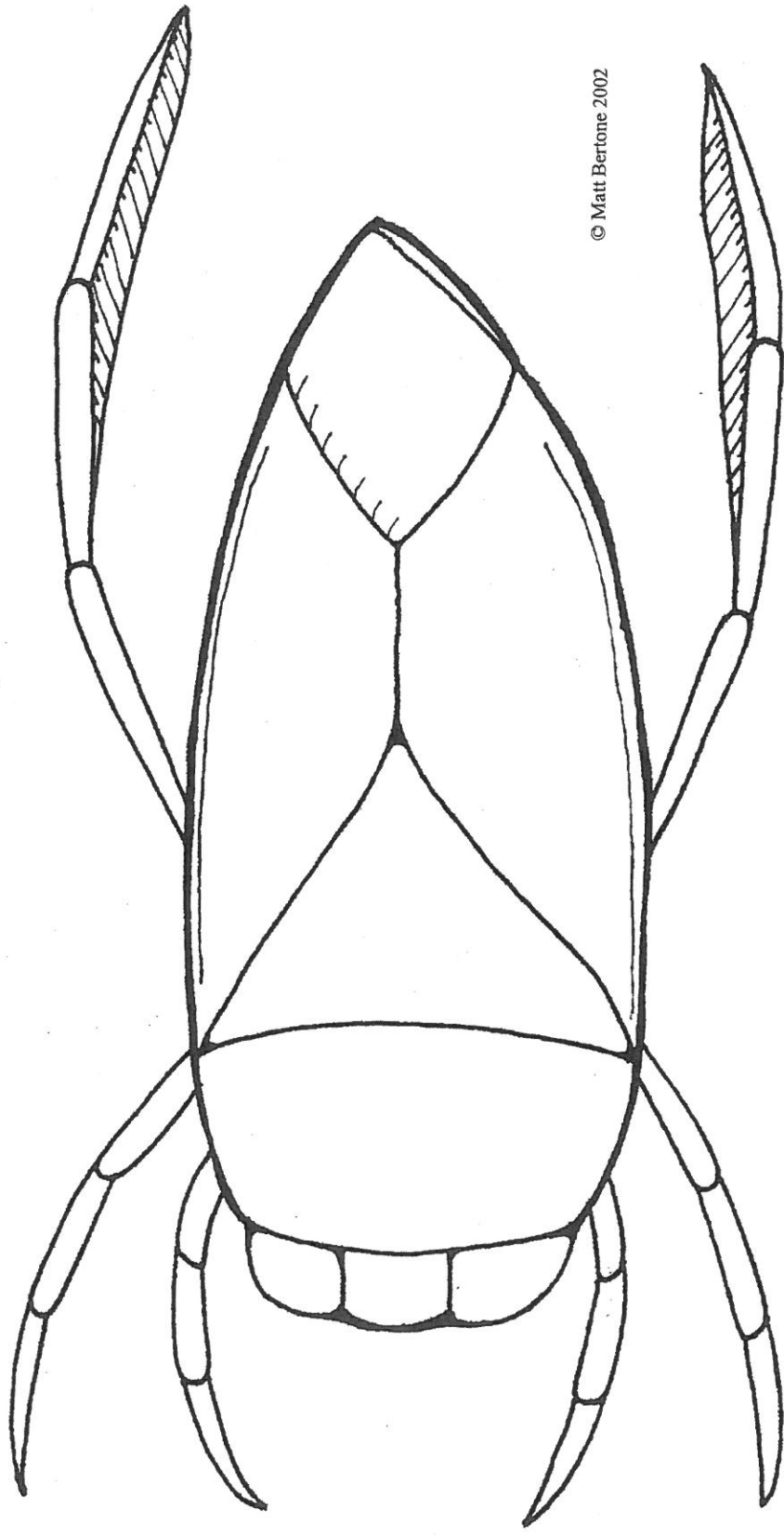
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Antlion

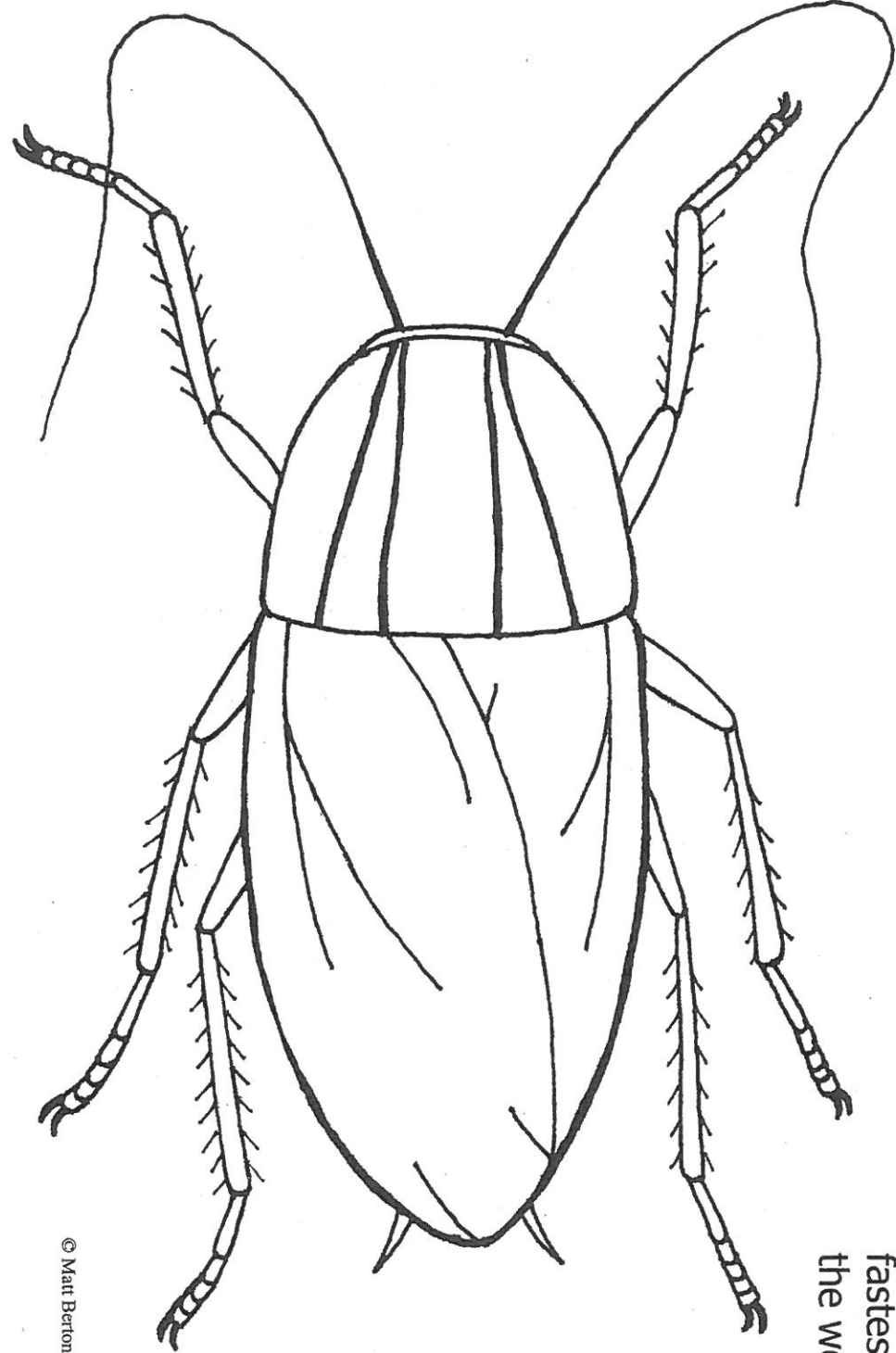
A is for antlion. Antlions dig a cone-shaped pit in loose soil and wait for small insects to fall in. The insects cannot escape because the soil is so loose, and they fall into the jaws of the waiting antlion. The adults are winged and look like damselflies

Backswimmer

B is for backswimmer. Backswimmers live in fresh water ponds and lakes. They swim upside-down, and capture insects that land on the surface of the water. They have a painful bite.



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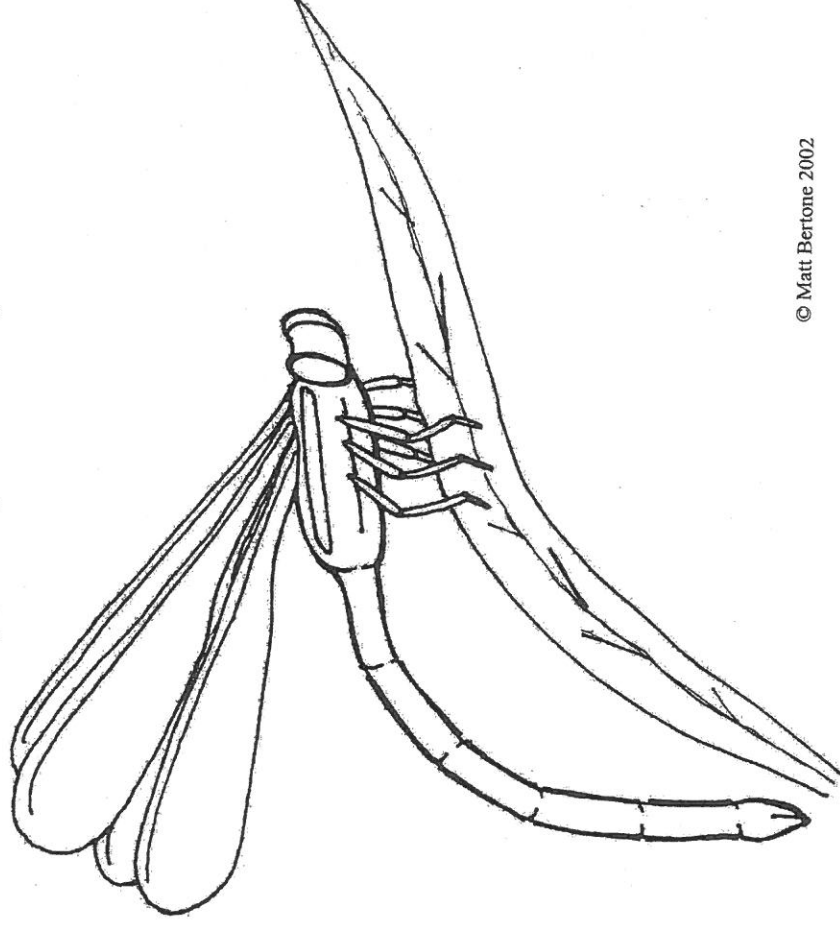
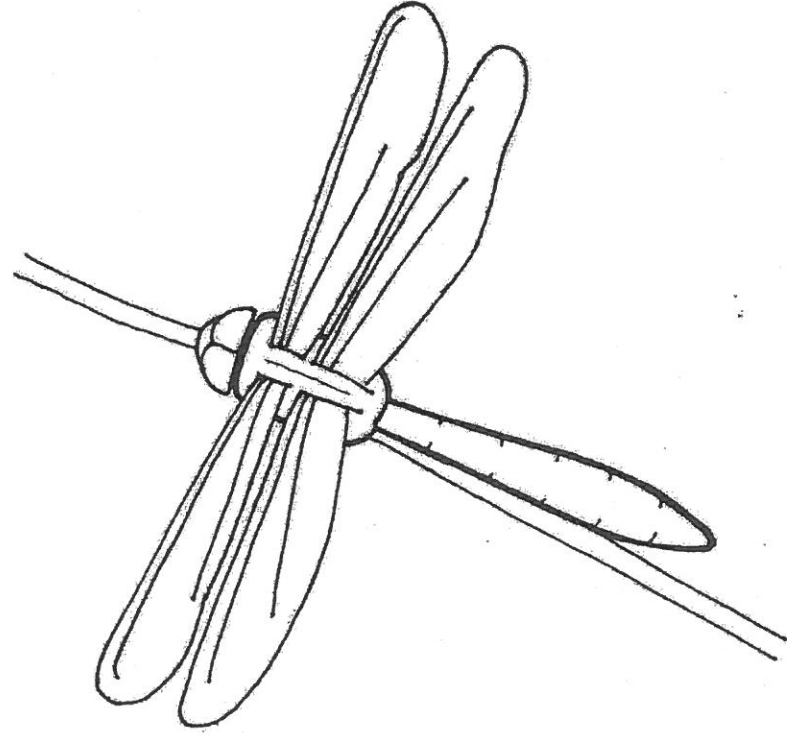
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C is for cockroach.
Cockroaches are often thought of as household pests, but most species live out in nature. Cockroaches are the fastest running insects in the world.

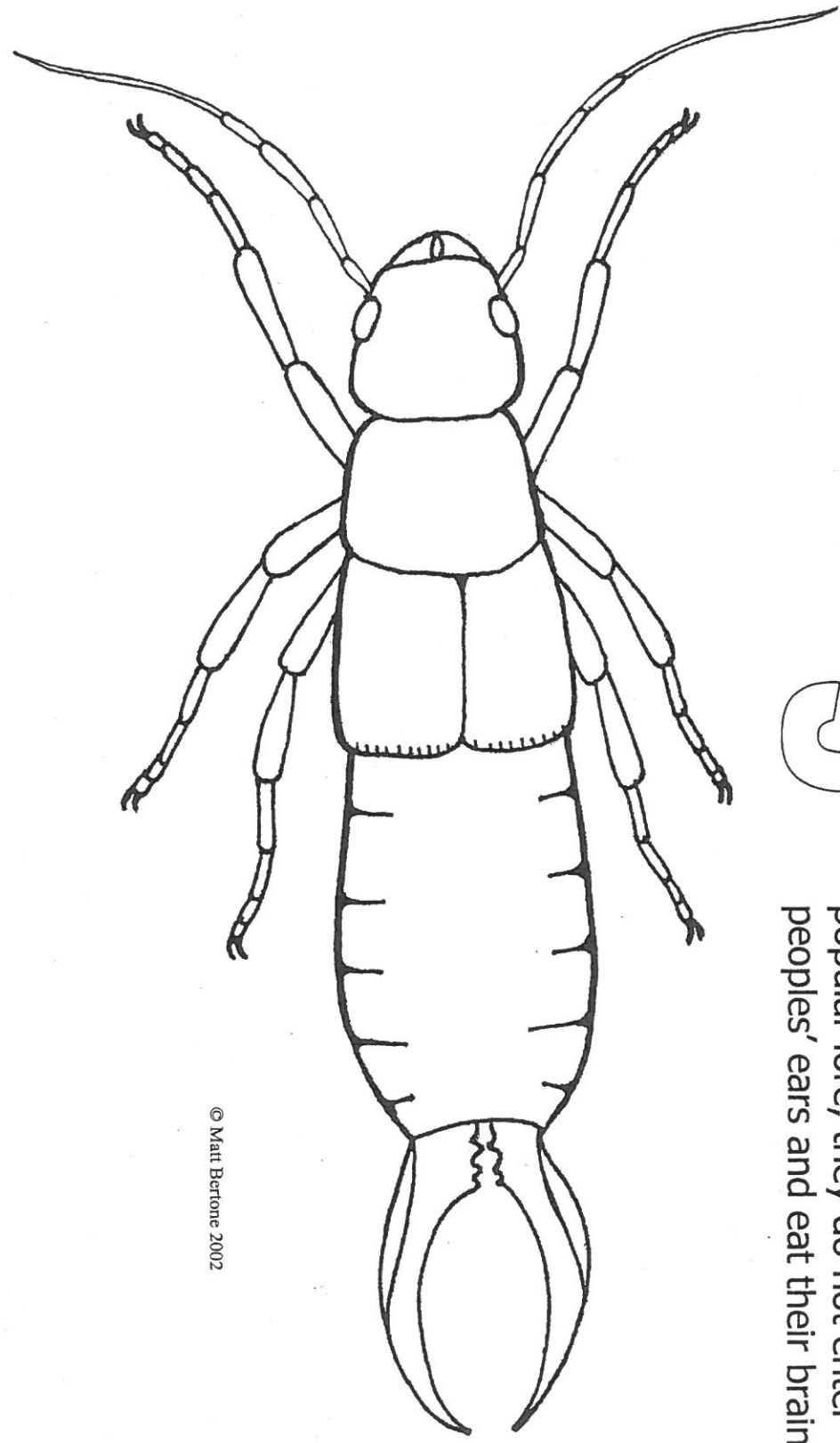
Cockroach

Dragonfly & Damselfly

D is for dragonfly and damselfly. Dragonflies hold their wings out flat at rest, while damselflies hold their wings up at rest. Both have **nymphs** that live in ponds and streams. The adults and young are **predatory**.



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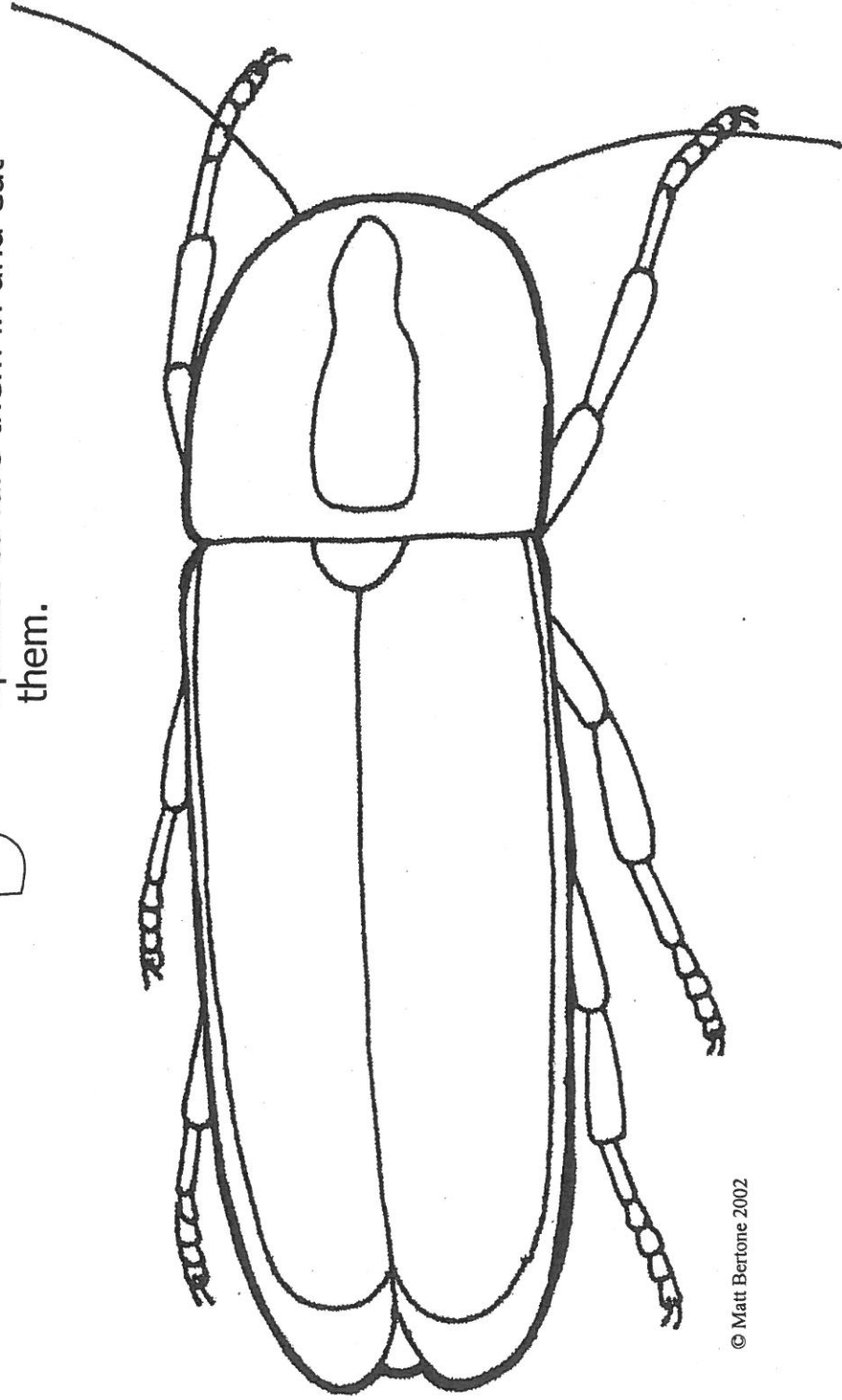
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Earwig

E is for earwig. Earwigs like to hide in dark places and **scavenge** for food. Female earwigs guard and clean their eggs. Contrary to popular lore, they do not enter peoples' ears and eat their brains.

Firefly

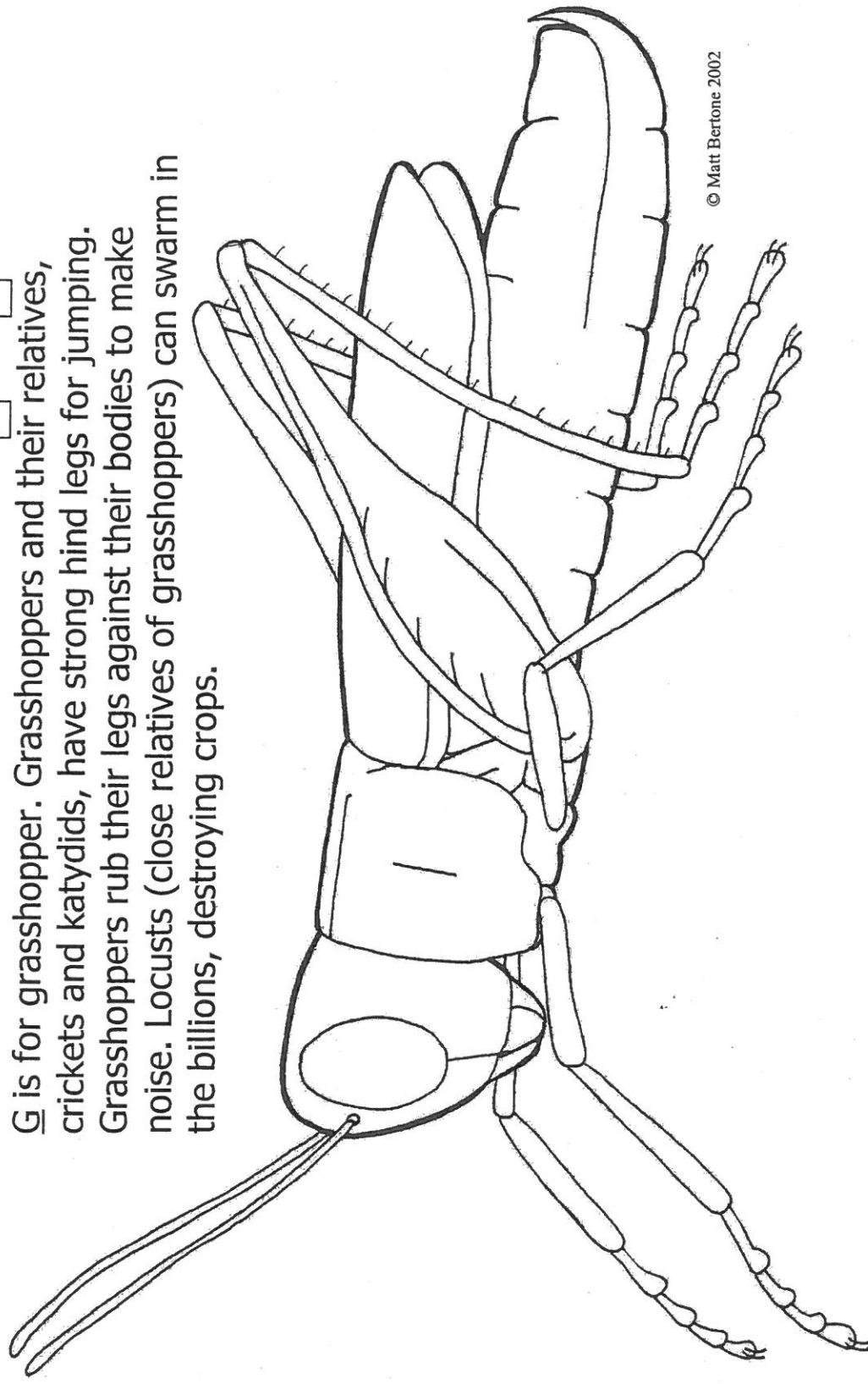
E is for firefly. Fireflies are beetles that can produce light. They use light signals to attract mates. Some **mimic** the signals of other species to lure them in and eat them.



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Grasshopper

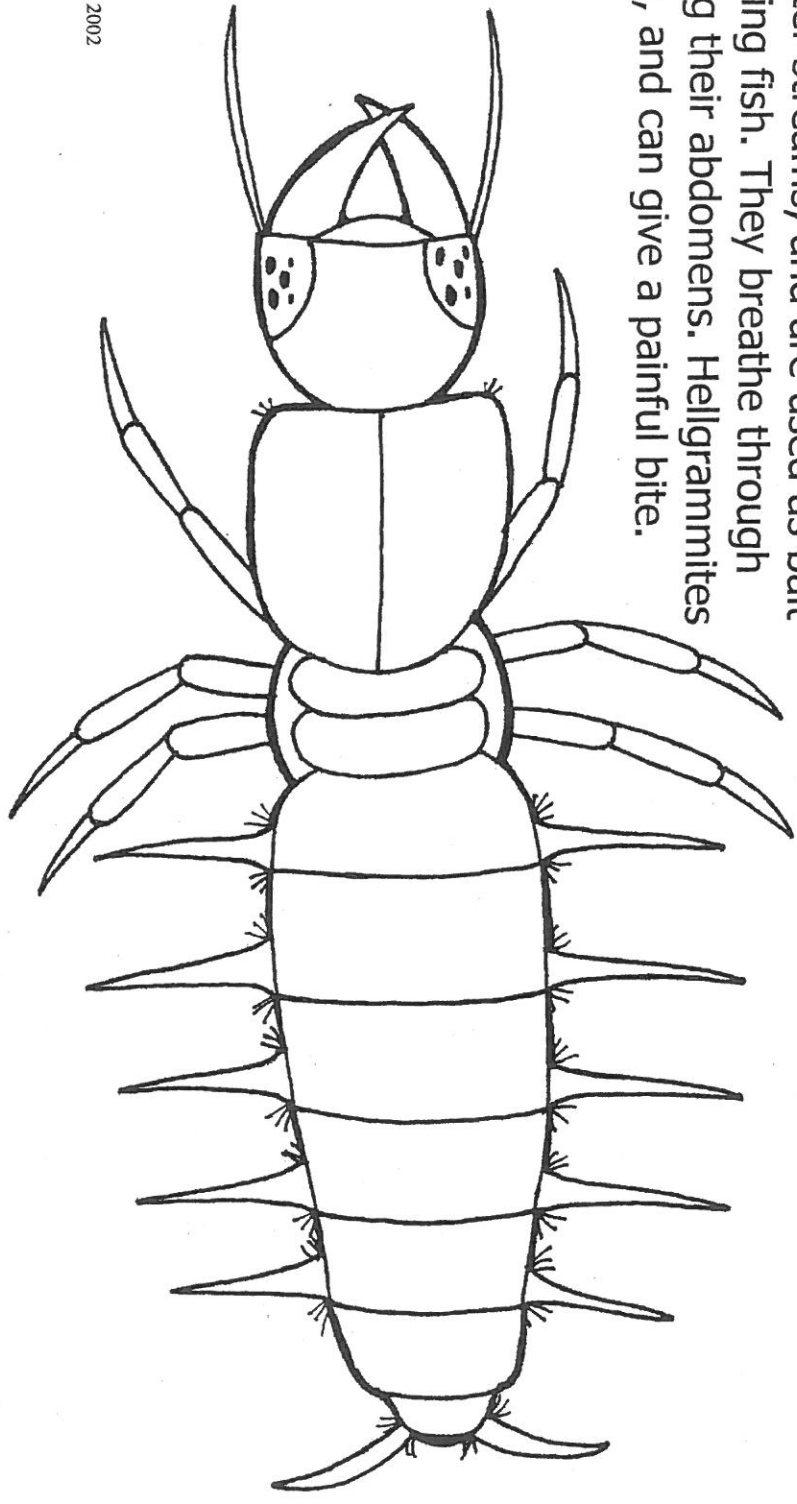
G is for grasshopper. Grasshoppers and their relatives, crickets and katydids, have strong hind legs for jumping. Grasshoppers rub their legs against their bodies to make noise. Locusts (close relatives of grasshoppers) can swarm in the billions, destroying crops.



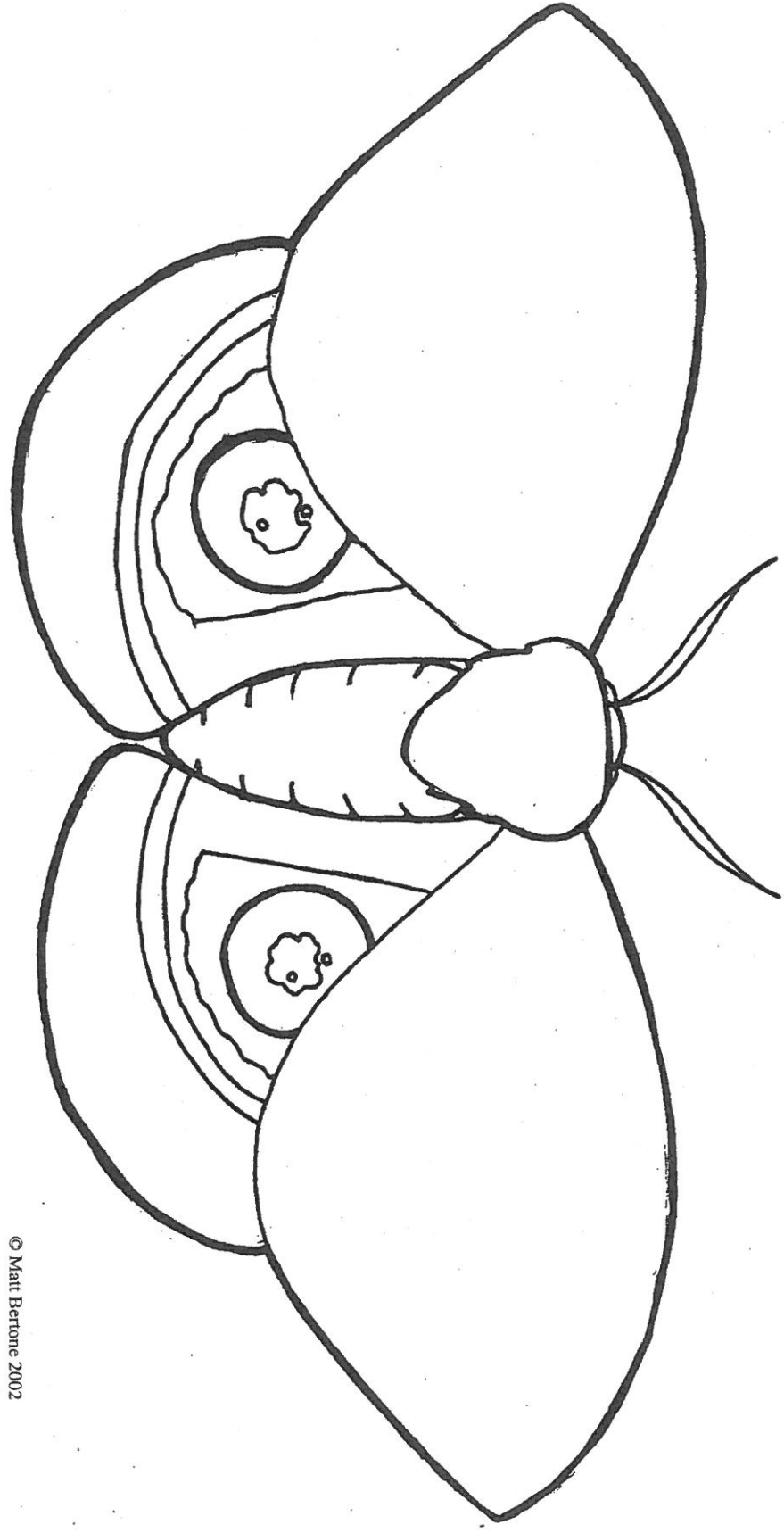
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Hellgrammite

H is for hellgrammite. Hellgrammites are the **larvae** of dobsonflies. They live in fresh water streams, and are used as bait for catching fish. They breathe through gills along their abdomens. Hellgrammites are large, and can give a painful bite.



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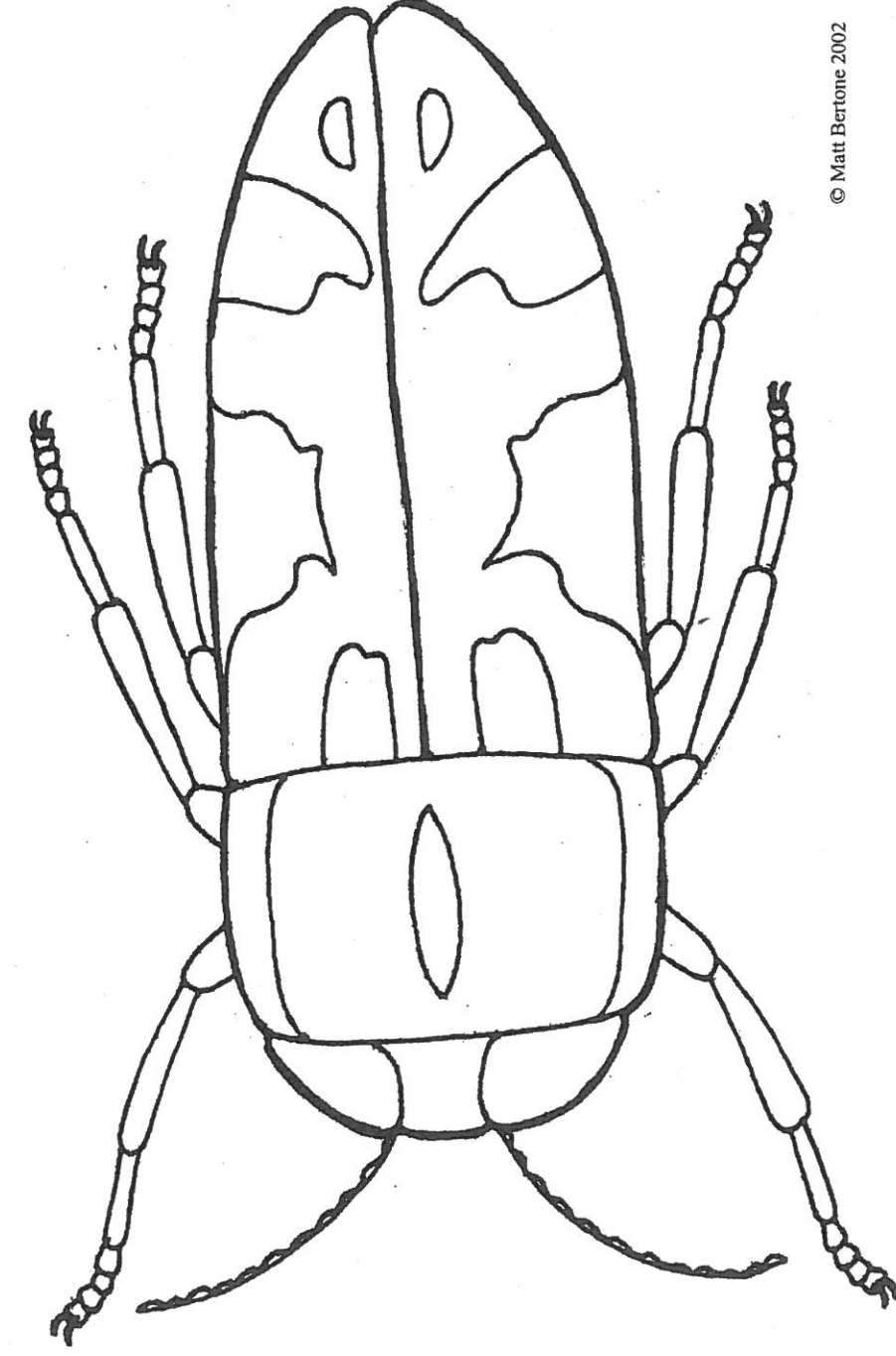


Io moth

Is for io moth. Io moths belong to the giant silkworm moth family. They do not feed as adults, but are voracious as **larvae** (caterpillars). Io moths have large eye-spots on their hind wings, which they use to scare predators.

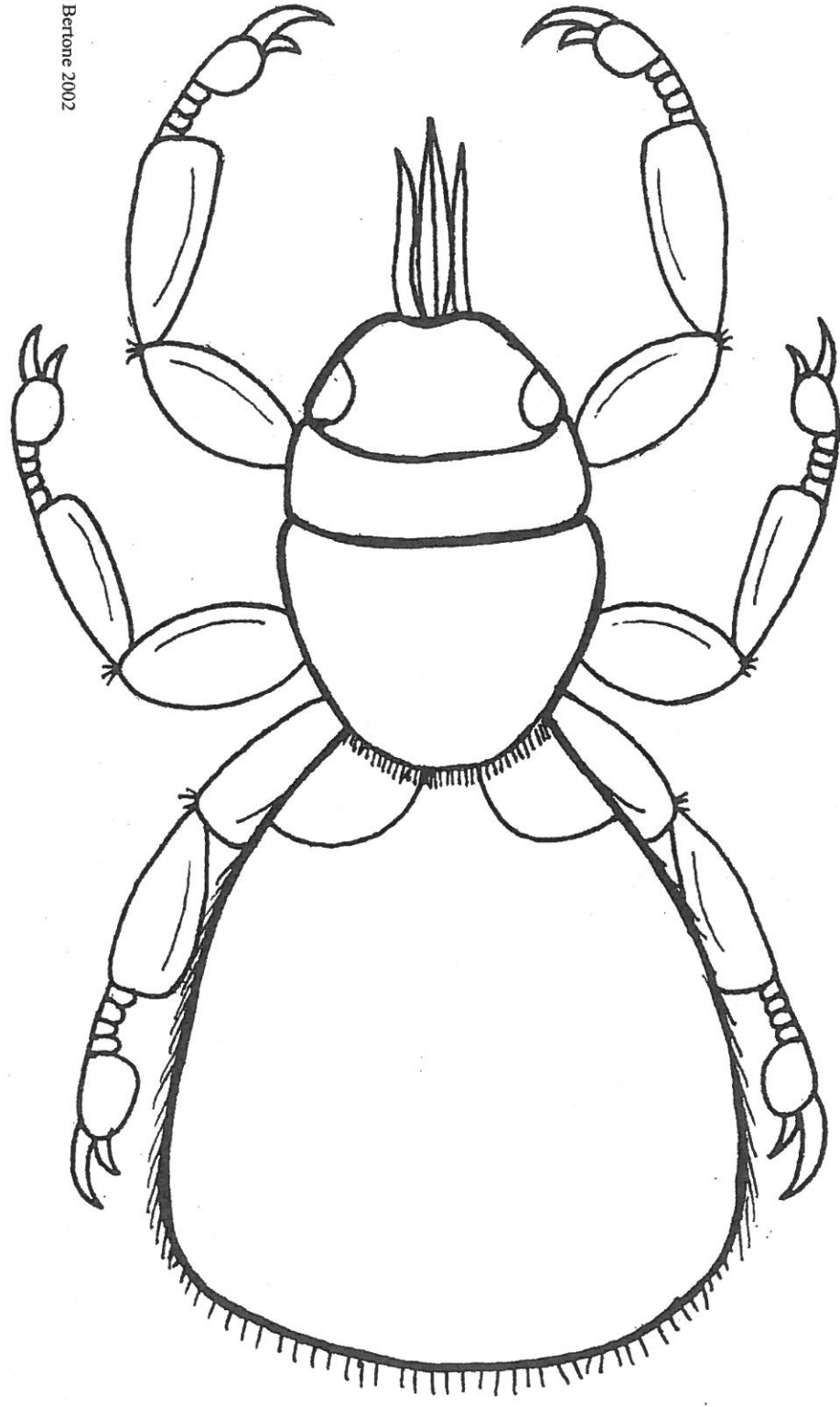
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Jewel beetle



J is for jewel beetle. Jewel beetles, or metallic wood borers, are so called because many have bright, metallic colors. In some parts of the world they are used as money and jewelry. Some live up to 20 years as **larvae**, feeding on wood.

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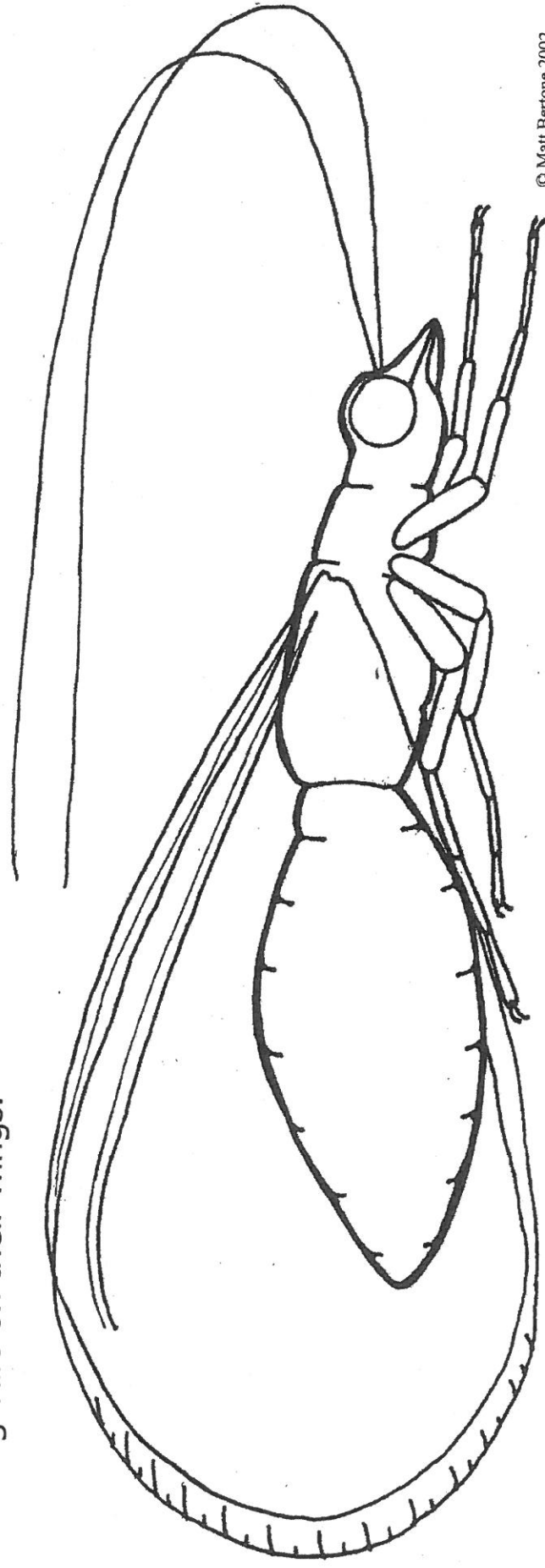
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Ked

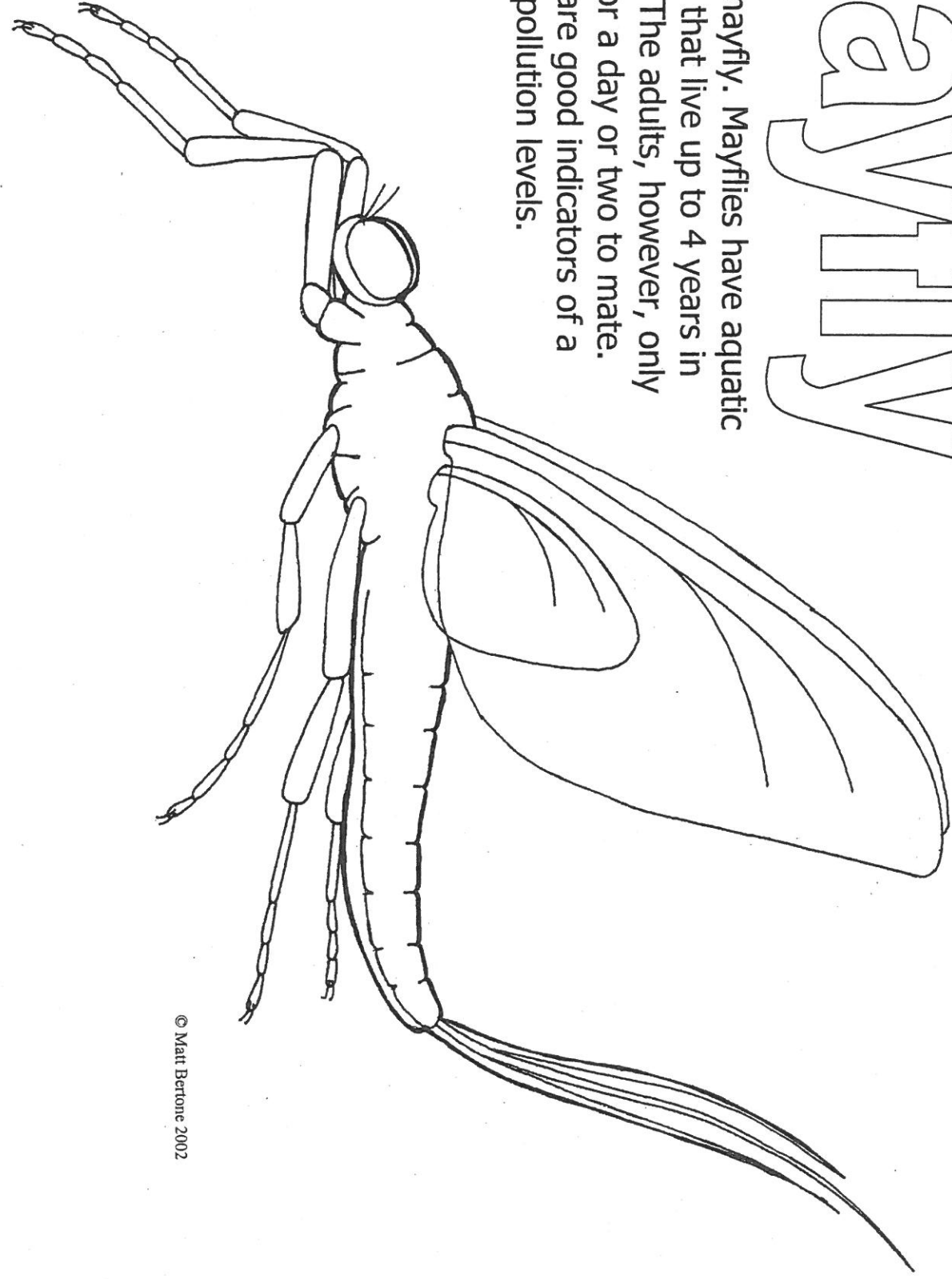
K is for ked. Sheep keds are wingless flies. They are specially adapted to live on sheep and suck their blood.

Lacewing

L is for lacewing. Lacewings lay their eggs on stalks, so the **larvae** do not eat each other. Adults and **larvae** are beneficial because they eat pests such as aphids, mites, whiteflies and moth eggs. Lacewings communicate by vibrating plants they are on, and hearing these vibrations using ears on their wings.



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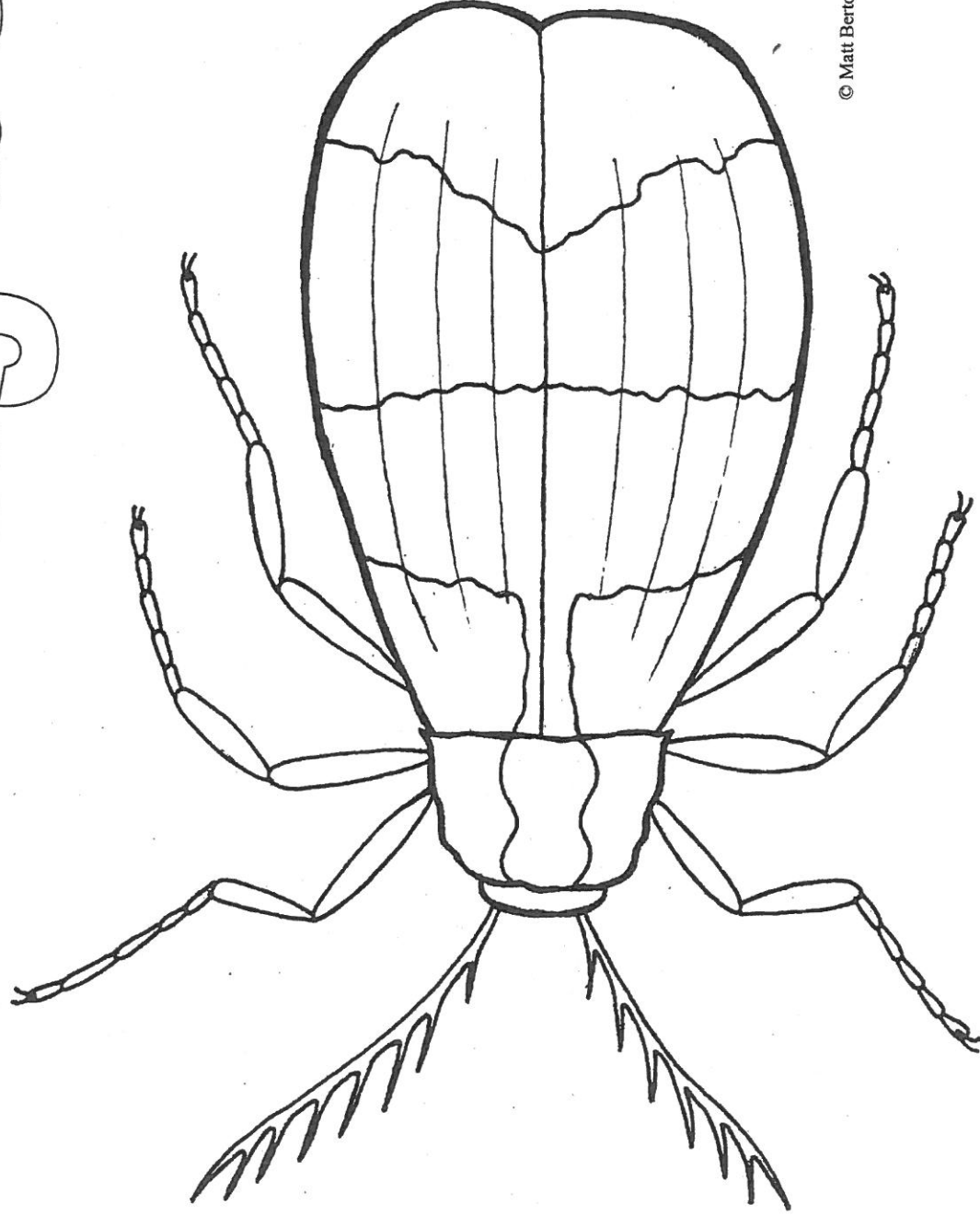


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Mayfly

M is for mayfly. Mayflies have aquatic **nymphs** that live up to 4 years in streams. The adults, however, only survive for a day or two to mate. Mayflies are good indicators of a stream's pollution levels.

Netwing beetle

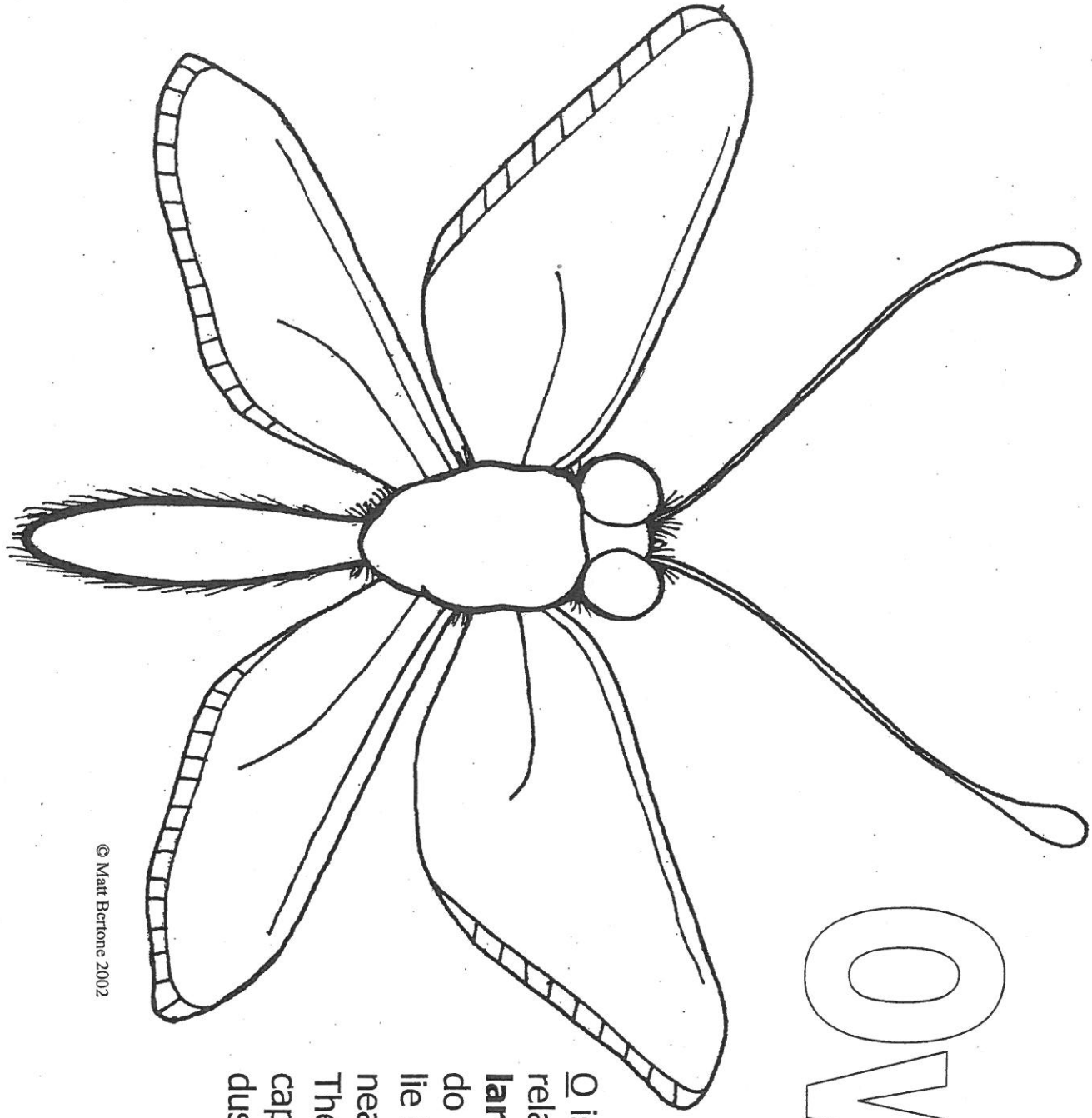


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N is for netwing beetle. Netwing beetles have soft **elytra**. Many are brightly colored to warn that they are bad tasting. Some moths and other beetles **mimic** the same colors and patterns, so that predators don't eat them.

Owlfly

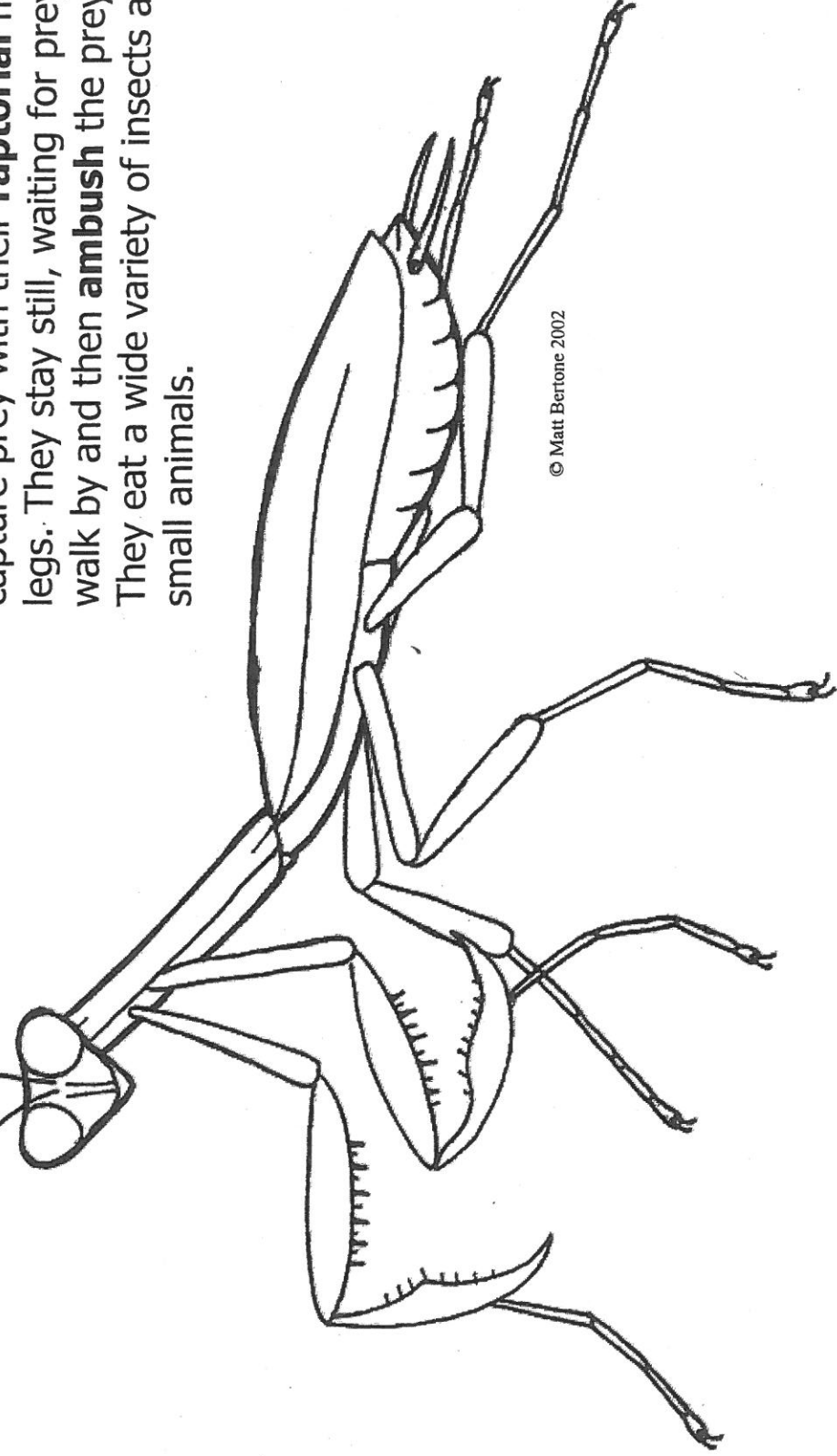
O is for owfly. Owflies are relatives of antlions. Their **larvae** are similar, but owflies do not build pits. Instead, they lie in wait for insects to come near and then capture them. The adults are swift fliers and capture prey, on the wing, at dusk.



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Praying mantis

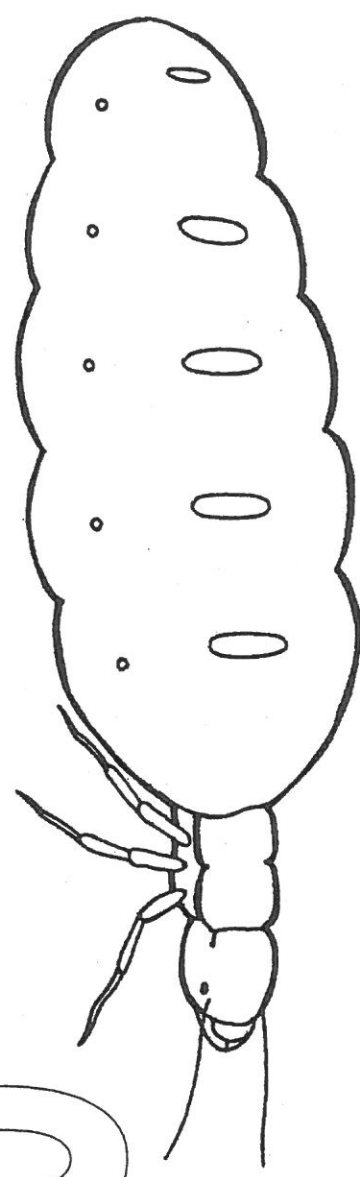
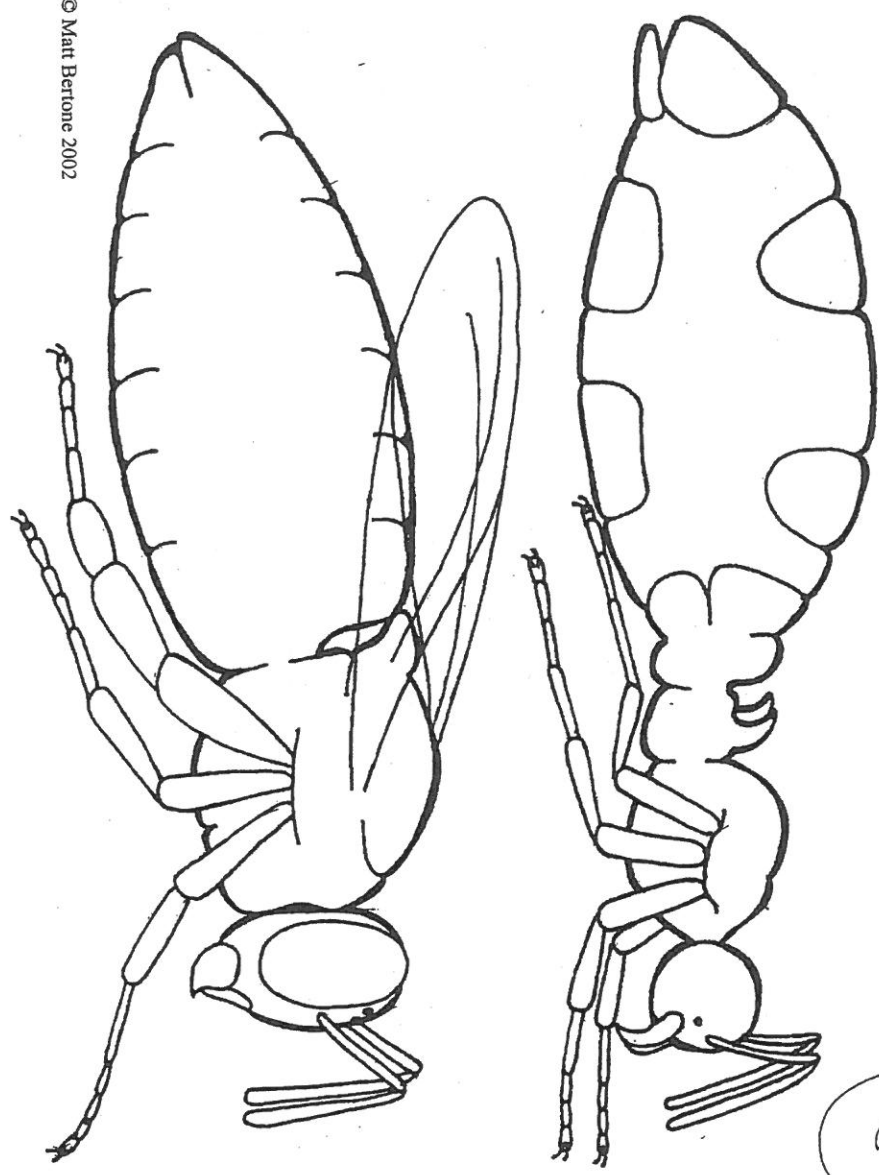
P is for praying mantis. Praying mantises capture prey with their **raptorial** front legs. They stay still, waiting for prey to walk by and then **ambush** the prey. They eat a wide variety of insects and small animals.



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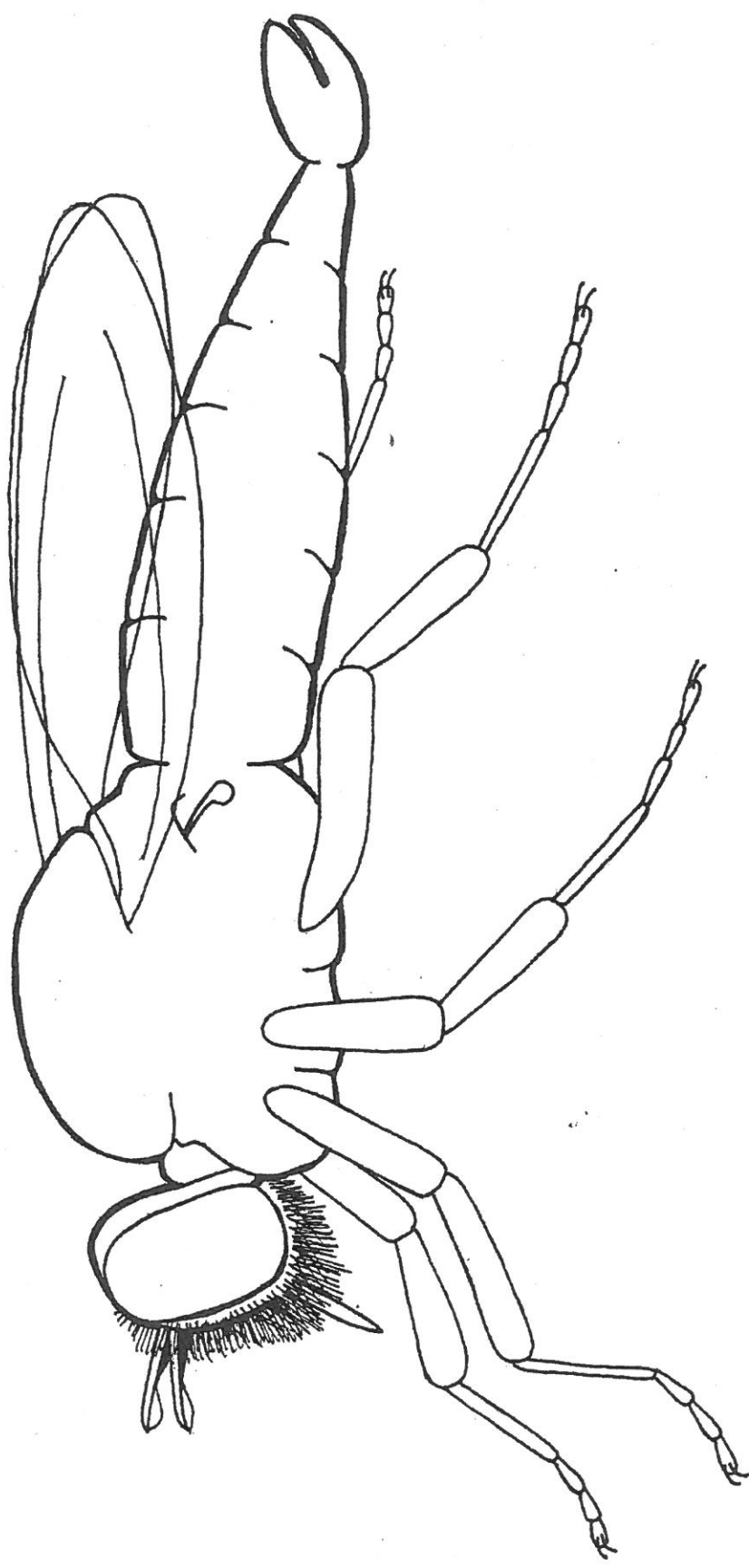
Q is for queen. Social insects like termites, ants and bees have queens. The queen is the only female in the colony that lays eggs. Queen termites can live for up to 50 years and lay millions of eggs during their lives.

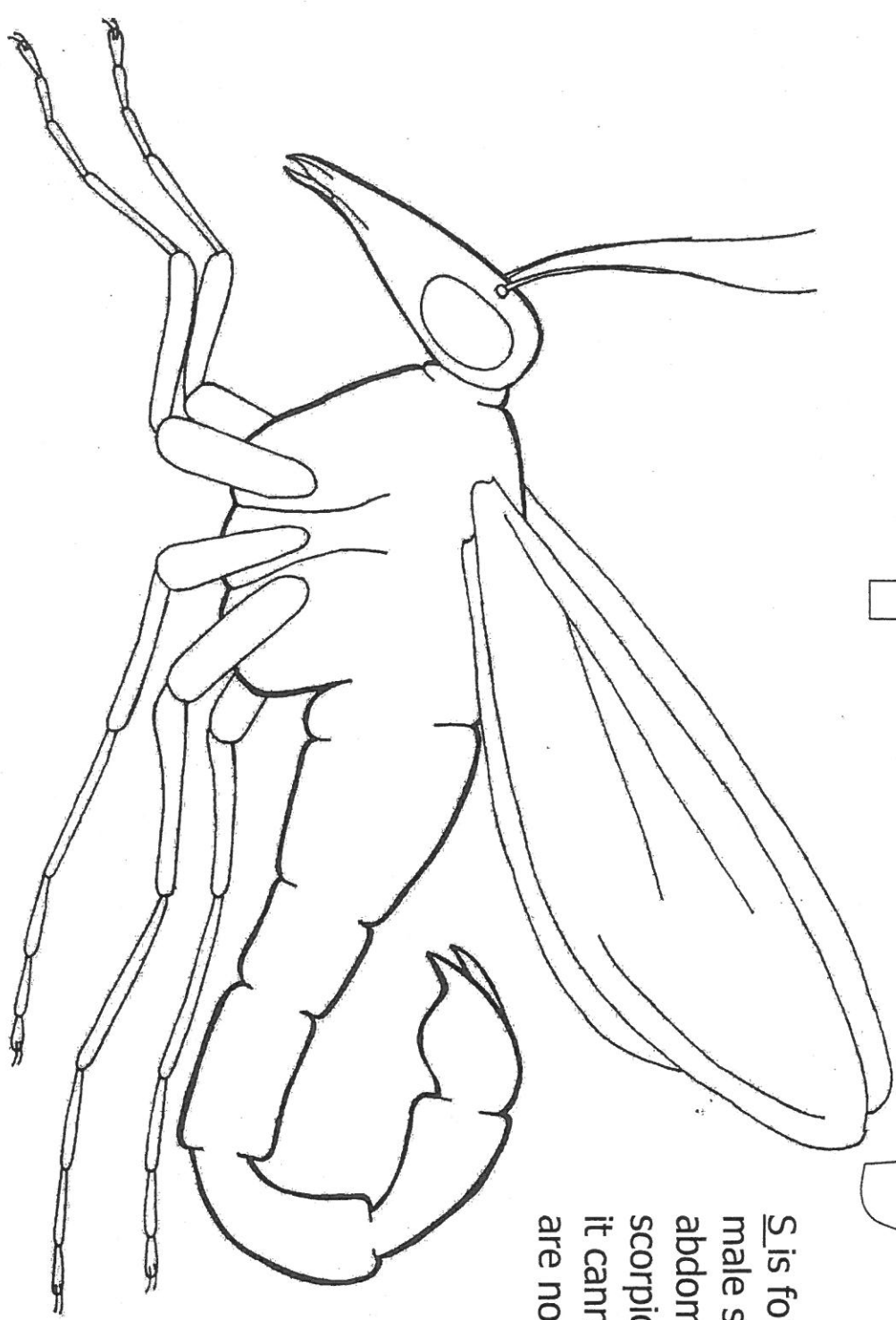
Queen



Robber fly

R is for robber fly. Robber flies are predatory flies that capture prey in mid-air. They can tackle insects much larger than themselves. Some **mimic** bees and wasps to get close to their prey.



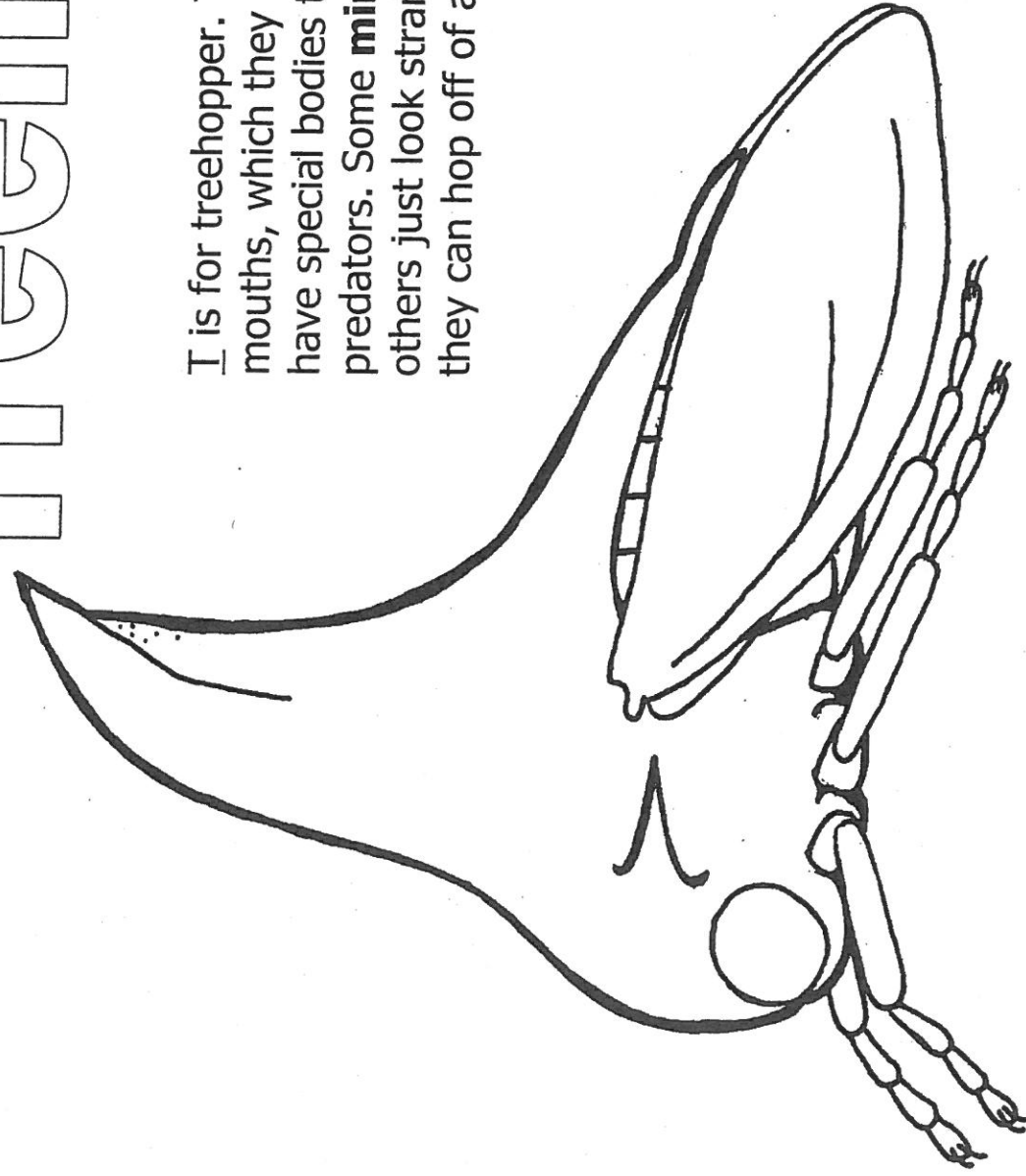


Sis for scorpionfly. The male scorpionfly has an abdomen shaped like a scorpion's stinger. However, it cannot sting. Scorpionflies are not true flies.

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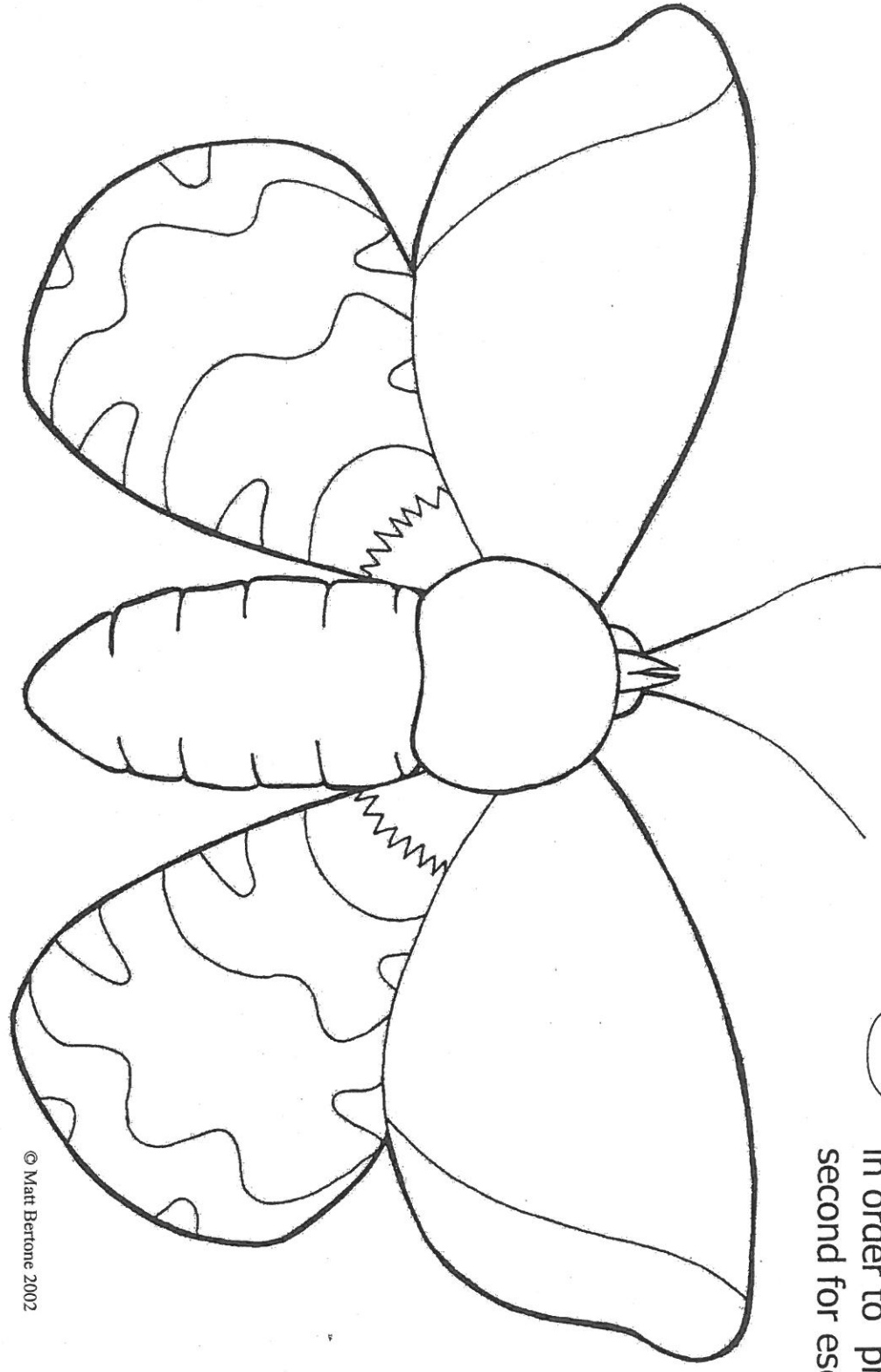
Scorpionfly

Treehopper



T is for treehopper. Treehoppers have straw-like mouths, which they use to suck plant juices. Most have special bodies to help them hide from predators. Some **mimic** thorns and buds, while others just look strange. As their name suggests, they can hop off of a plant or tree very quickly.

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U is for underwing moth. Underwing moths use the bright flash of their hind wings to startle predators in order to provide a split second for escape.

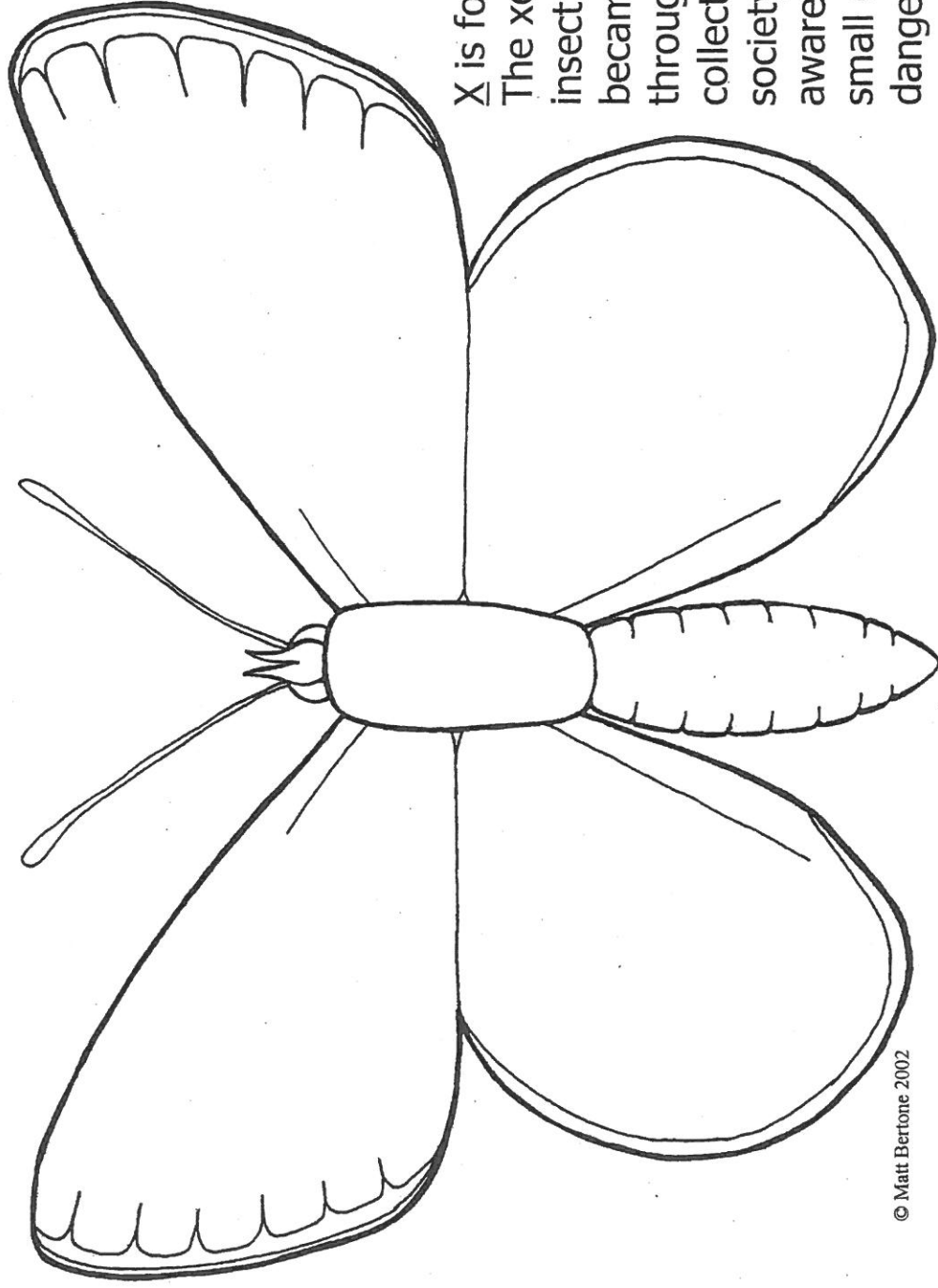
Underwing

Velvet ant

V is for velvet ant. Velvet ants are actually wasps. The males are winged, while the females are not. Females have a painful sting. A common species is called a cow-killer, because people thought that they could sting cows to death.



Xerces blue

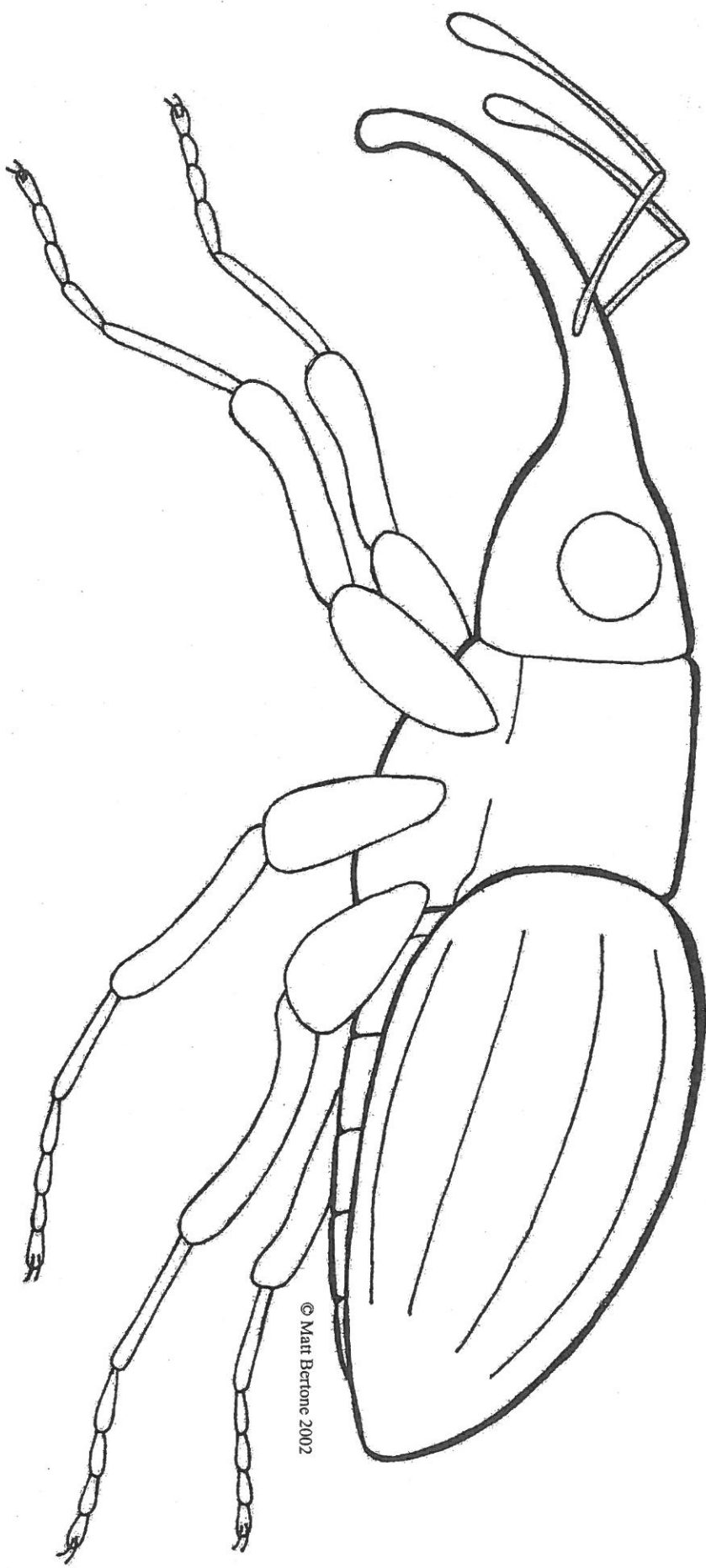


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X is for xerces blue butterfly. The xerces blue is an **extinct** insect from California. It became **extinct** in 1941 through habitat loss and collecting. Today the Xerces society helps to make people aware of insects and other small creatures that are in danger of becoming **extinct**.

Weevil

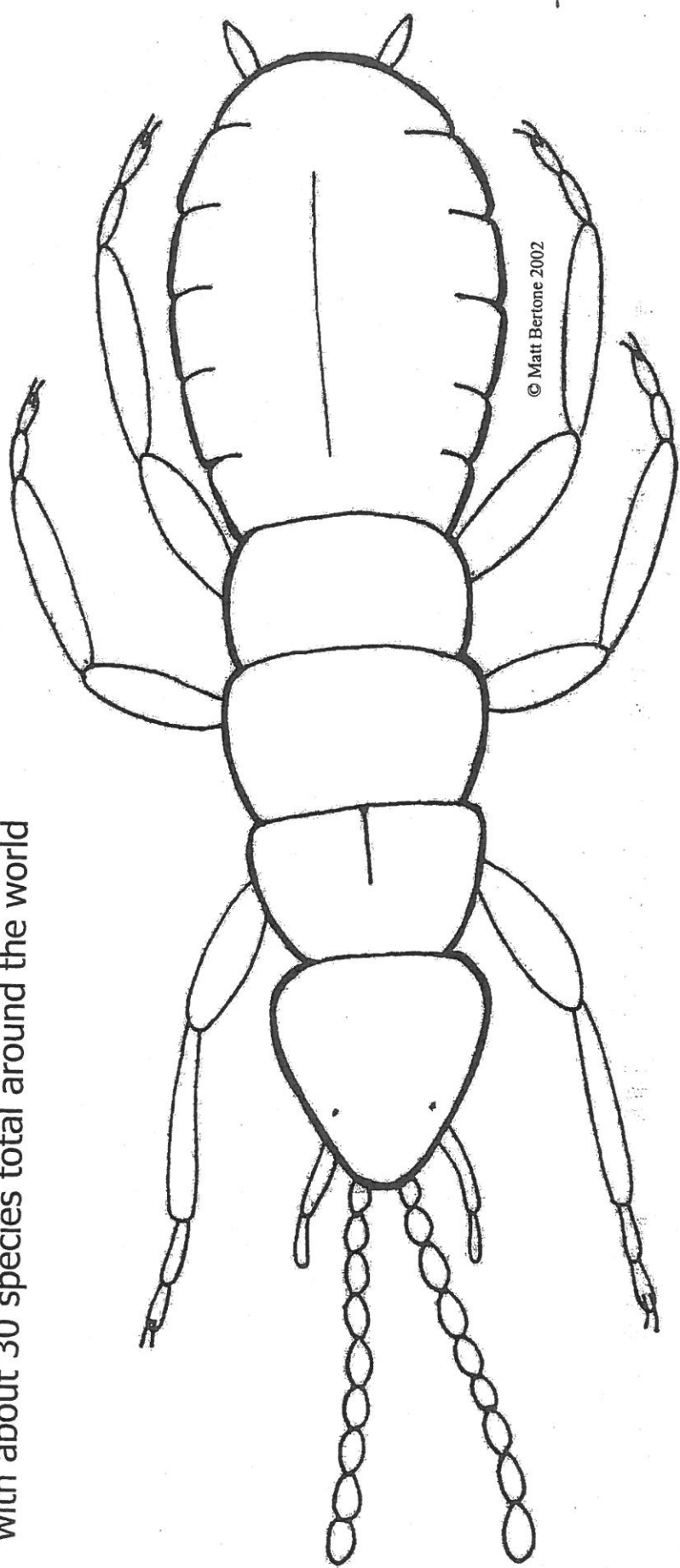
W is for weevil. The weevil does not have a straw for a snout (even though it looks that way), but instead the tip of it has tiny chewing mouthparts. The cotton boll weevil uses these mouthparts to chew a small hole in the boll, and then lays her eggs inside.



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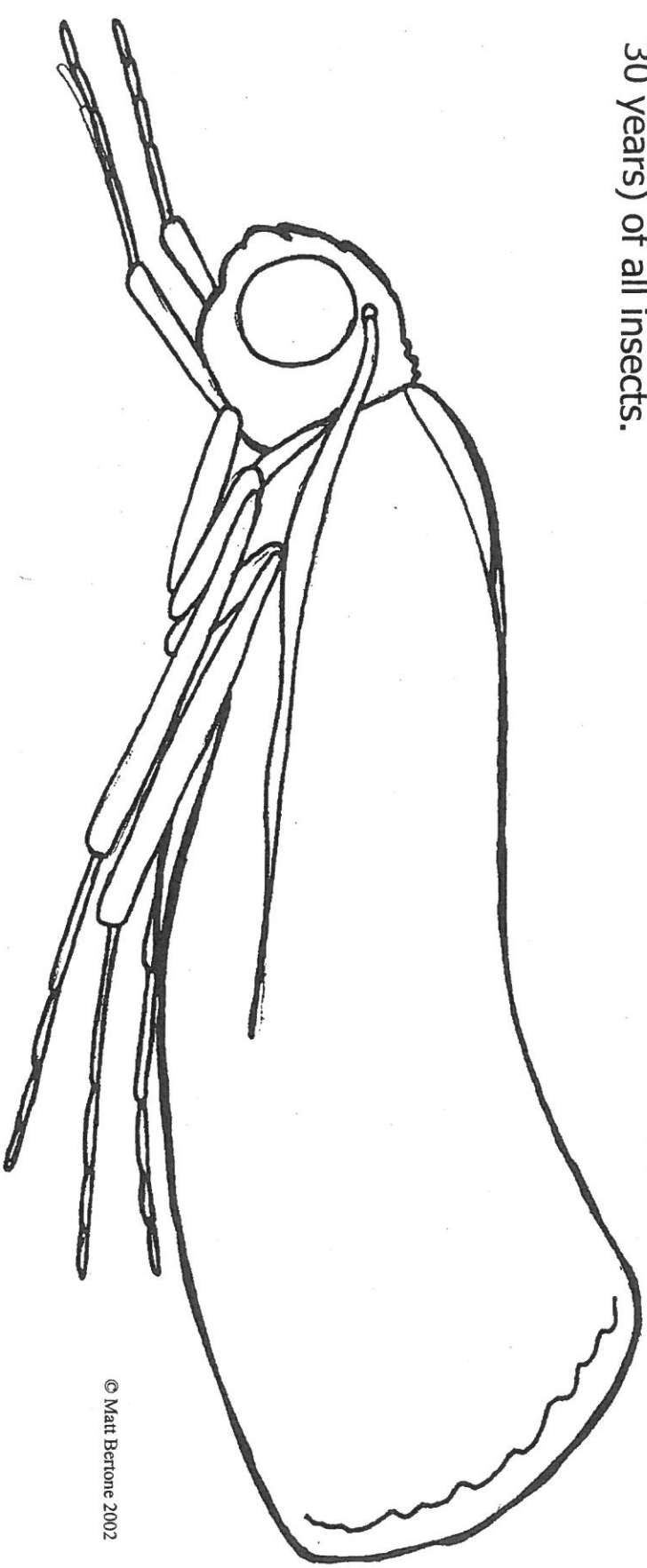
Zorapteran

Z is for zorapteran. Zorapterans are tiny insects that **scavenge** for food in litter and under bark. They are the smallest group of insects with about 30 species total around the world



Yucca moth

Y is for yucca moth. Yucca moths have a mutual relationship with the yucca plant. The moth is the only thing that pollinates the plant, while the the plant's seeds are the only food source for the developing **larvae**. Yucca moths have the record for the longest **diapause** (up to 30 years) of all insects.



Insect Glossary

Ambush: when an insect surprises another insect in order to capture it

Diapause: similar to hibernation, but can happen during any season

Elytra: the hard outer wings on beetles

Extinct: when an insect population dies out completely

Larva (plural=larvae): the young of an insect that goes through complete metamorphosis (egg --> larva --> pupa --> adult)

Mimic: when an insect looks or acts like something else such as another insect or a plant part

Nymph (plural=nymphs): a young insect that goes through incomplete metamorphosis (egg --> nymph --> adult)

Predatory: characteristic of an insect that feeds on other animals

Raptorial: a special leg design that allows insects to capture prey

Scavenger: an insect that feeds on decaying matter and anything it comes upon