



## **Sculpt North American Insects**

Create some awesome insects out of clay and learn about the many different insects found in North America!

Materials needed for your sculpted insects:

- Air dry clay or Polymer clay - soft (for small children) or medium
- Card Stock or Baking Paper
- Newspaper
- Plastic knife (not serrated) or a short ruler
- Optional - Medium acrylic gloss glaze (for a shiny finish) or Acrylic Paint.
- Small brush.
- A damp scrap piece of cloth or piece of old clothing.
- A small makeshift rolling pin - e.g. rod (metal, acrylic or glass), small jar, or flat metal tray to flatten
- Art shirt

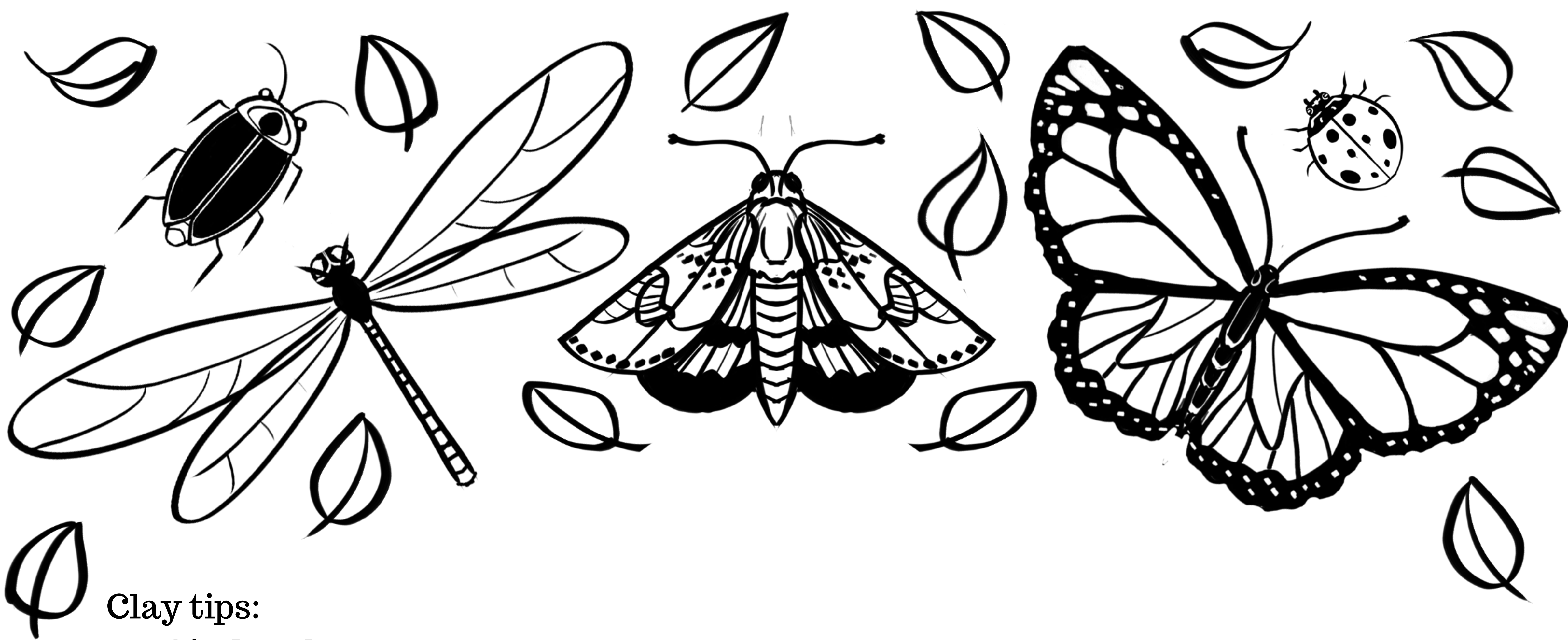
Instructions

Prepare Your Workspace:

- Wear an art shirt as it can be messy.
- Lay down a baking paper sheet or your card stock as a work surface, and lay down newspaper underneath if you are using water.
- Clean up any dust or dirt.
- Gather all the materials and tools you need.

Before sculpting your insects:

- Pick 1-3 North American insects to sculpt.
- Insects have 6 legs, a head, antennas, an abdomen, and a thorax. Some insects can have many eyes, mandibles, exposed or hardened wings that form a shell.
- Choose your clay colors or paints based on the chosen insects colors.
- You can mix clays or paints together to get the desired colors or shades.
- Choose the amount of polymer or air dry clay to use.



### Clay tips:

- Air dry clay:
  - To wet the clay so you can shape it, you can use a small spray bottle or a cup of water with a paint brush.
  - Lay newspaper down underneath your sculpting surface.
  - A small amount of water and clay mud can be used as glue to attach.
  - Let it air dry in a safe place for 2-3 days depending on the size.
  - Once dry, you can paint your sculpted insects.
  - Wash your hands when you are done working with the clay.
- Polymer Clay Guide and Tips:
  - If you don't have the right colors of clay for your insect you can always mix colors or use acrylic paint.
  - Wood glue can be used to glue pieces together before drying.
  - Polymer clay needs to be kneaded before use for desired results.
  - Optional - Soft pastels, eye shadow or fine colored pencil shaving dust (For small details)
  - Do not touch your face while working with the clay.
  - Wash your hands when done working with the clay.
  - Always keep the room well ventilated while working and baking.
- Hair dryer to dry polymer clay (always with an adult):
  - You can dry it with a hair dryer in a cardboard box for 5-10 minutes depending on the size of the clay sculpture.
- Baking to dry polymer clay (always with an adult):
  - Baking paper can be used on a tempered glass or metal baking tray.
  - Use an oven mitt when handling hot objects.
  - Foil sheets can be folded to cover the tray and prevent burning.
  - Polymer clay can be baked in a preheated oven (convection is best) at 270-300°F for 15-30 minutes for the clay to harden.
  - The clay will have instructions in case there are any specific requirements or temperatures.
  - Polymer clay can sit in the oven for the full 30 minutes as long as the oven is not over 300°F otherwise it will burn. An oven thermometer can be used just in case.



### Working with your clay:

- Knead your clay with your hands or roll it out to condition the clay before working with it.
- Separate your clay into each of your insect's body parts.
- Keep your hands clean with a damp cloth when working with many colors of clay. (Working with one color at a time helps a lot!)
- Roll small clay balls that can be shaped to make your insects body.
- You can roll or press the clay flat and cut out or shape wings.
- It's not necessary to be accurate, you can leave out the legs if the wings are too big.
- Roll clay noodles for long legs or antenna.
- Tear drop or tube shaped clay can help with short legs.
- Use a plastic knife to carve details on your insect.
- Shape each of the parts with your fingers.
- For polymer clay, you can attach the body, limbs, mandibles, wings or antennas with wood glue if it's dry. If it's still damp, press each of the limbs to the surface.
- You can use a ruler for long cuts of clay, creating strips.
- For air dry clay, you can roughly score the surface with a wet brush, on the side make a small amount of clay mud paste and place it on the clay spots you are attaching like glue and press firmly - you can wipe off the excess with your finger or a damp cloth.
- You can marble polymer clay by lightly kneading 2-3 colors in one clay mound, stopping when you see swirls.
- You can imprint cool patterns or shapes into the clay by pressing household items into the clay (like a sieve for a crisscross pattern!). Get creative with your parents advice on what you have and can use. Cling wrap can be used to cover anything that is not metal or glass.
- If your clay gets stuck on the paper, use your knife or ruler to lift your clay.
- Let your clay insects dry.
- Paint or gloss and decorate your insects.