Minibeast Adaptations

When you have found a minibeast, find out how the minibeast suits its habitat. Discover how it eats, hides and protects itself in the habitat that it lives within.

ANIMAL (not to scale)	WHERE FOUND	ADAPTATIONS
 Ground beetle	On the ground, under logs during the day	Fused wing cases act as protecting armour. Can discharge an irritating fluid when threatened (not to humans). They vomit on their food so the digestive enzymes make it easier to eat. Nocturnal hunter. Fast runner.
 Worm	In the ground, in the soil.	Earthworms are adapted to life underground. Their streamline shape allows them to burrow through soil. Worms produce mucus to keep their bodies moist and slimy, plus it helps them to breathe in oxygen though their bodies.
 Caterpillars	On the underside of leaves, in the grass, hedges and nettles	Caterpillars have suckers underneath their bodies, which allows them to defy gravity and walk along the underside of leaves and branches. Most caterpillars are a green or brown colour, which allows them to camouflage in their habitat of leaves and trees.
 Harvestman	On the ground and on tree trunks	Compact body and very long legs. It catches its insect prey by using hooks on the ends of its legs. They defend themselves by secreting a foul-smelling fluid and if they are caught, they are able to shed a leg to escape.
 Spider	On shrubs, trees and on the ground	Has eight legs and up to eight eyes. They have fangs and venom to catch and kill their prey. They are able to produce silk from special glands. Some are able to camouflage themselves by changing colour to blend in with the background.
 Centipede	Under rocks, leaves or rotting wood	The length of the centipede's legs (they have between 30 and 202) increase as you go down the centipede's body. This prevents the centipede from stepping on its own legs. It also helps them to move quickly in a special rhythm. Front antennae and back legs are similar length, so you can't tell which is front and back. Some centipedes can walk backwards. They have fangs to inject venom into their prey.

ANIMAL (not to scale)	WHERE FOUND	ADAPTATIONS
 Ladybird	Generally everywhere	They are brightly coloured, warning predators of their bitter taste. They can hibernate during the winter.
 Damselfly	In the air and around lakes and ponds	Before adults fly each day, they have to warm themselves in the sun, so can't fly much on cloudy days. Damselfly bask in the sun to absorb as many rays as possible. Damselfly adult legs are strong. They are used to capture and hold prey instead of walking. They have compound eyes to see in detail. Damselflies' two pairs of wings move independently, allowing them to fly backwards or forwards, hover, and do tricks.
 Butterfly	In the air, on leaves and flowers	Their wings have different colours on them which allows them to camouflage into their habitat. The peacock butterfly has markings on it which makes it look as though it has eyes, which scares predators off.
 Millipede	Under rocks, in leaf litter, in rotting logs	Their bodies are coated in a waxy coating that hold moisture in and reduces water loss. Most species have 40 –400 legs. Two pairs of legs on each segment, which makes them slow moving so they can push though soil and under stones.
 Woodlouse	Damp dark places, hiding in walls, under stones and in compost heaps	Woodlice have adapted by developing the ability to recycle waste and absorb water from their surroundings. Woodlice move faster in dry environments and slower in humid environments
 Snail	Shaded damp areas, under hard objects like rocks, flower pots and wood	They breathe through a hole called pheumostome near the shell opening. Snails can open and close this hole, to prevent moisture escaping. Snails must not dry out, if it does get too hot, they hide in their shell. Their stomachs are protected inside the shell too.
 Springtail	Where there is lots of moisture and high humidity	A springtail that's 3 to 6mm long, can leap 75 to 100mm. This is due to a forked structure located inside its abdomen which works like a spring. This means they can hide and move away from predators.