

The “Optera” Song of Insects

Lyrics (c) Ellen J., McHenry and Susan K. Streit

Butterflies and moths that soar
In the fields right out your door,
Leopard -spotted butterflies
Are **Lepidoptera**.

Bees and wasps that sting your knees,
Ants that crawl on peonies,
Hives are filled with honey from
The **Hymenoptera**.

Beetles and weevils will cut your yield
If you plant a cotton field,
So keep your collards and your cukes
From **Coleoptera**.

Grasshoppers and crickets, too,
I bet they can out-jump you!
So get your jumping rope and jump
High with **Orthoptera**.

Fleas that bite your dog and cat,
Don't go sit where they just sat!
Fleas will siphon blood from you,
They're **Siphonaptera**.

Bugs that get into your bed,
Bugs that stink when they are dead,
Bugs that swim and bugs that stride
Are “true” **Hemiptera**.

Flies and gnats that buzz your nose,
Aren't as bad as mosquitoes;
They'll dip into your picnic food,
So swat those **Diptera**!

Glossary:

“Ptera” means “wing”

“Lepi” means “scales”

“Hymen” means “membrane”

“Coleo” means “sheath” (The coleoptera have a tougher set of wings, the sheaths, covering the real wings.)

“Ortho” means “straight”

Collards are similar to spinach.

“Cuke” is a short for cucumber.

A siphon is a mechanism that sucks liquids.

“Hemi” means “half” (Hemiptera wings are half hardened, half soft and membranous.)

“Di” means “two” (Diptera have just two wings, one on each side.)