



INSECT OLYMPICS!

Insects make up the largest group of animals on the planet, 70-80% of all animal species. Within this group there are several very interesting record holders.

- Largest Butterfly – Queen Alexandra’s Birdwing (25 cm)
- Longest Repeated Migration – Monarch butterfly (4000km over 70 days)
- Loudest insect – African Cicada (107.7 decibels)

Have students compete against these insect athletes in your own Insect Olympics – chances are they will beat the insect in events #3, #4 and will be beaten by the insects in events #1, #2. There is no need to have the actual insects compete!

Event #1

Flea Jump

Stand along a line and jump as far as you can. Measure how far you jumped in inches.

***A flea can jump 200x it’s body length**

Take your jump length / your height in inches = # of body lengths you jumped

Event #2

Fly Flap

Stand with your arms out and have someone time you for 10 seconds. Flap your arms up and down as fast as you can counting the number of flaps.

***A biting midge can flap it’s wings 100x per second. Divide your number by 10.**

Event #3

Cockroach Dash

Start running at the start line and run 10 yards. Have someone time you.

***A cockroach can run 10 yards in 24 sec.**

Event #4

Maggot Crawl

Time how fast you can crawl on your stomach for 10 feet. (Use your feet to push)

***A fly maggot can crawl 10 feet in 15 minutes.**

Event #5

Cockroach races

You can purchase Madagascar Hissing Cockroaches from many pet stores or the Butterfly Pavilion gift store. They make a fun classroom addition and can be interesting competitors in insect Olympics. Create a straight racecourse and race the roaches against each other. Pick your favorite to win!

***Roaches are cold-blooded and may not move very quickly – be patient for the race!**