

Millipedes and Centipedes

Many legs, two very different soil jobs



Millipede

SHREDDER

Kingdom	Animalia <i>animals</i>
Phylum	Arthropoda <i>"jointed feet"</i>
Subphylum	Myriapoda <i>"many feet"</i>
Class	Diplopoda <i>"double feet"</i>

- **2 pairs of legs** on most body segments
- Eats dead leaves and rotting wood, turning them into food for fungi and bacteria
- Slow and round. Curls into a tight spiral to protect itself



Centipede

PREDATOR

Kingdom	Animalia <i>animals</i>
Phylum	Arthropoda <i>"jointed feet"</i>
Subphylum	Myriapoda <i>"many feet"</i>
Class	Chilopoda <i>"lip feet"</i>

- **1 pair of legs** on each body segment
- Hunts insects, spiders and worms, mostly at night
- Fast and flat. Its front legs are **venom claws** for catching prey

Where in the world?



Millipedes and centipedes live on every continent except Antarctica. Look for them in damp, shady places under leaves, logs and mulch.

Explore safely, with an adult

- Always have an adult with you when you look under logs and leaves.
- Use a stick or trowel, and roll a log **toward** you so anything underneath moves away from you.
- **Never pick up a centipede.** Its venom claws can give a painful bite.
- Millipedes can ooze a liquid that stains skin and stings eyes. Wash your hands and keep them away from your face.
- In Florida, scorpions and snakes can hide under logs too. Look, don't reach.
- Put the log back gently when you're done.



Who Lives Under the Log?

Color the millipede and the centipede in their home under the leaves and the mushroom log.

mushrooms

log

centipede

millipede

leaves



The Centipede Meets the Millipede

Soil Story Mad Libs

Ask a friend for each kind of word under the lines, without telling them the story. Write their words in, then read it out loud!

One _____ evening, a centipede named _____ raced out from under the _____ mushroom log. Its legs moved so fast they looked _____ ! By the mushrooms, it bumped right into a millipede named _____ , who was slowly munching on a _____ dead leaf. " _____ !" said the centipede. "What are you doing?" "I'm a **shredder**," said the millipede. "I chew up dead leaves so the fungi and bacteria can turn them into _____ for the soil." "I'm a **predator**," said the centipede, clicking its venom claws. "I hunt _____ at night." The millipede curled into a tight _____ and _____ until the centipede scurried away. Under the log, the mushrooms _____ . Every critter has a job in the Living Soil Network!

Word Search

Words go across, down or diagonally.

C	L	F	L	M	H	S	S	S	S	R	K	V
H	E	U	G	H	Y	H	L	M	O	H	G	R
P	V	N	L	A	A	R	I	E	P	I	I	G
Y	E	M	T	U	L	E	I	O	A	L	L	L
P	N	I	C	I	H	D	D	A	H	V	P	G
R	O	L	K	G	P	D	P	U	P	U	E	A
E	M	L	P	V	L	E	V	C	W	O	D	S
D	S	I	M	Y	G	R	D	P	F	N	D	V
A	K	P	C	L	O	G	M	E	O	M	C	F
T	F	E	I	M	U	S	H	R	O	O	M	E
O	A	D	E	R	T	O	F	U	N	G	I	V
R	E	E	U	U	A	P	W	L	E	S	S	E
A	A	V	D	R	E	L	N	G	G	A	I	G

Find these words:

MILLIPEDE
CENTIPEDE
SHREDDER
PREDATOR
MYRIAPOD
MUSHROOM
FUNGI
LEAVES
SPIRAL
VENOM
LOG
SOIL

