

# Dr. Jason Cryan, Entomologist

North Carolina Museum of Natural Science

Podcast length: 16:14



## LESSON PLAN

### **SYNOPSIS**

The Walking Classroom's Laura Fenn talks with [Dr. Jason Cryan](#), the Deputy Museum Director for Research & Collections, as well as an entomologist at the [North Carolina Museum of Natural Science](#). Jason shares about the immense biodiversity in the insect world and what happens when scientists discover a new species.

### **VOCABULARY**

Review key vocabulary (included definitions are limited to the context of today's podcast)

- **curator:** (noun) keeper of a museum or other collection; ensures specimens are maintained for all of the future so researchers can continue to use them for scientific research.
- **biodiversity:** (noun) the variety of life in the world or in a particular habitat or ecosystem.
- **temperate:** (adjective) a region or climate characterized by mild temperatures.

### **QUESTIONS FOR THOUGHT & DISCUSSION**

1. Jason Cryan explained that species discovery happens out in the field, but it can also happen in the museum by looking through collections. How does this relate to the importance of having curators of collections?
2. Jason Cryan shared that there are over 1,000,000 different species of insects known to science, but that's still only a fraction of the actual number. Why is important to keep trying to discover new species and understand how species are related to one another?
3. Jason Cryan explained that there are rules about how a species gets its name that is part of a branch of science called Taxonomy. Why is it important that there are rules about how an organism is named?

## BOOK SUGGESTIONS

Consider reading aloud or making some of these titles available to students to reinforce and extend some of the concepts covered in today's podcast.

### **[Tree of Life](#) by Rochelle Strauss**

*There are millions of forms of life on earth, and since humans are just one of them, there is still much to learn about the organisms we share this Earth with. This book shows how organisms are classified into the five kingdoms and what each tells us about our world.*

### **[Cicadas!: Strange and Wonderful](#) by Laurence Pringle**

*Why do cicadas buzz? Learn the answer and more in this book about these noisy insects!*

### **[National Geographic Kids – Everything Insects](#) by Carrie Gleason**

*This book is packed full of incredible photos and amazing facts about insects.*

## EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

The following activities are ways to build on and extend some of the topics discussed in the podcast. We strongly encourage you to always preview videos prior to showing them to your students.

### **[Magic Cicada](http://bit.ly/1Rmc1ge) <http://bit.ly/1Rmc1ge>**

*Magiccicada.org*

This website is dedicated to cicadas and tracking various broods. There is information about when broods will be emerging in the near future, their behavior, maps, citizen science projects involving cicadas, and much more. There is also a link so that students can hear what the cicadas sound like.

### **[Bubble, Bubble, Spittle Bug](http://bit.ly/1HPURTT) <http://bit.ly/1HPURTT>**

*Article from HighlightsKids.com*

This is an article about spittlebugs along with images to help students better understand these interesting creatures. There is also an option to have the article read aloud to students.

### **[Why is biodiversity so important?](http://bit.ly/1OL7M7B) <http://bit.ly/1OL7M7B>**

*A video from Ted-Ed (4:18)*

This video that explains that some ecosystems are stringing than others, and better able to survive great change, due to their biodiversity.