

## The Praying Mantis

In the tropical climates of the world there lives an unusual insect. It stands on its back legs and its front legs are held upright like it is praying. This is how the praying mantis got its name. The praying mantis is an insect. It is about two and half inches long and is usually green or brown. The praying mantis lives about the twigs and leaves waiting for its prey.

The praying mantis plays an important role in natural environments. When an insect comes near, the praying mantis is very quick. He grabs his prey with its two front legs and eats it live. The praying mantis eats flies, aphids, grasshoppers, moths and caterpillars. The farmers like the praying mantis because it helps control the insect population around their crops.

Females lay up to 300 eggs. The eggs are laid in a liquid that hardens to protect the eggs. In the spring the eggs hatch. The young mantis is called a nymph. Hungry, they scatter looking for small insects to eat.

The mantis is found in tropical climates of Northern Africa, Europe and parts of Asia. Some however are found in the United States. In fact, the praying mantis is the state insect of Connecticut. It can be found there in May and June and they stay alive until the weather gets too cold.

The praying mantis makes a fun pet. You have to be careful because its legs are delicate. It can crawl up your arm. Sometimes it looks like it is staring at you while it prays. Would you like to have a praying mantis for a pet?

## ANSWER THE QUESTIONS:

1. Why do farmers like the praying mantis?
  - a. It is an interesting insect.
  - b. It helps control the insect population in crops.
  - c. It is a beautiful color.
  - d. It makes a great pet.
  
2. The praying mantis can be found in \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. in the mountains
  - b. in tropical climates
  - c. in the ocean
  - d. in the desert
  
3. What is a young mantis called?
  - a. a hummingbird
  - b. a swan
  - c. a nymph
  - d. an egg
  
4. What is the author's purpose of this writing?
  - a. persuade
  - b. entertain
  - c. inform
  - d. none of these
  
5. Which of the following IS true?
  - a. The praying mantis can be found in Connecticut in September.
  - b. The praying mantis is the state insect of Connecticut.
  - c. The praying mantis can be found in California.
  - d. None of these
  
6. The praying mantis can be found in \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. Northern Africa
  - b. Europe
  - c. Asia
  - d. all of these
  
7. The praying mantis got its name because \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. of the way it holds its front legs
  - b. of the way it holds its nose
  - c. of the way it holds its wings
  - d. none of these