**The Praying Mantis**

Have you heard of the praying mantis? Do you know anything about this unusual insect? Read on to find out more.

**Appearance**

The praying mantis is 6inches long and about as long as a tea cup. The female mantis is larger than the males so can eat them alive. They do this because they need the extra strength to lay a large quantity of eggs.

**Diet**

This incredible insect is a carnivore (meat-eating) and a formidable predator. They can camouflage in the plants and stack their prey which include caterpillars, flies, beetles and grasshoppers. They grip the bug with their long, spiky front legs and eat the bug alive usually head first!

**Name**

The Praying Mantis gets its unique name as it folds its long, front legs together so it looks like a person praying. Their scientific name is *Mantis Religiosa* – do you know why?

Don’t be scared of these insects as they can’t sting and don’t have any venom. They do, however, make excellent pets as they can be handled safely and walk from hand to hand.