

A Flutist's Field Guide To Insects

♦ ♦ ♦
Joseph Eidson
(2011)

- ♦ ♦ ♦
1. *mating habits of fireflies*
 2. *stink bug secretions contain surprising medicinal value*
 3. *ladybugs with nine spots are extremely rare*

- Piccolo / Alto Flute / Flute -

Program Notes

This work is inspired by studies of three different insects: fireflies, stink bugs, and ladybugs. These insects are extremely common to my home state of Missouri and reading each field guide brought back memories of childhood summers spent outdoors. The work is intended to be whimsical and light in nature despite being fiendishly difficult for the performer in some passages.

Dr. Sara Lewis's research on fireflies shows that the flashes of the male are followed by a specific delay and observed by the female, who may flash back a single time to indicate her interest. Individual pitch entrances in movement one represent this flashing pattern, forming a theme followed by three variations. Eventually the field fills with flashes before dying away to a lone male calling out into the night.

Dr. Leah Teffo's dissertation on the Venda tribe in South Africa posits that their consumption of stink bugs (both raw and cooked) provides essential nutrients while also helping the skin's complexion. The secretions are also used to treat stroke, asthma and colds. The music in this movement is mysterious and mystical, like the rites of a shaman when viewed by an outsider.

Although native to North America, the nine-spotted ladybug population is in rapid decline. The Lost Ladybug Project (www.lostladybug.org) is dedicated to photographing ladybugs of all types, specifically those with nine spots. The final movement begins with playful music representing the fluttering of the elusive ladybug's wings. The recommended method to obtain accurate photographs of ladybugs is to chill them in a cooler – the music is similarly frozen in the middle, stretching out the melodic material in a frigid stasis.

About The Composer

Joseph Eidson (b. 1981) holds degrees in theory and composition from the University of Kansas and the University of Texas. His music contains rhythmic drive and a preference for lyrical melodies. He enjoys writing for winds but has also developed an infatuation with vocal music over the past two years. For more information on Dr. Eidson's music please visit www.josepheidson.com. The composer must be notified of all performances of this work.

Performance Notes

Should either the piccolo or alto flute be unavailable to the performer, any or all of the movements may be performed on the standard flute.

Mvt. 1

- ♦ Keep a steady tempo through any full measure of rest – this is a musical depiction of the specific time interval between mating flashes of the firefly.

Mvt. 2

- ♦ Grace notes should be smooth and connected; slurs were not included in these figures for ease of reading.
- ♦ Timbral trills are notated with diamond-shaped noteheads. Choose an alternate fingering of your liking for the given pitch, preferably one that differs in tone color and/or intonation with the ordinary fingering.
- ♦ The desired effect at the end of the first line (and again at measure 25) is a gradual morphing of the sound from timbral trill to tongue pizzicato, ending with scattered key clicks.

Mvt. 3

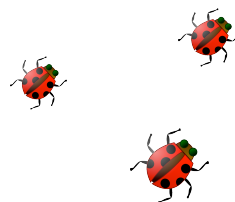
- ♦ Speak the indicated T-K syllables into the headjoint while fingering the notated pitches.
- ♦ The harmonics at measure 28 should be produced by fingering the pitches on the lower line – the resulting sound is notated above in cue-size notes. The desired effect is a subtle shimmer in tone quality. Breathe as necessary during this passage.

Duration: *approximately 8 minutes, 15 seconds*

Mvt. 1: *2 minutes, 45 seconds*

Mvt. 2: *ca. 3 minutes*

Mvt. 3: *2 minutes, 30 seconds*



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1. mating habits of fireflies

Joseph Eidson
(ASGAP)

Graceful (♩ = 84)
smoothly

Piccolo

mp *p*

10 17

mp *mf* *p*

20 *gaining momentum*

mp

30 *pure, pristine* 33

p *mf*

38 45 *sinister*

f *mf* *p*

48

mf

56 61 Slightly faster (♩ = 112)
fluidly; mercurial

f *mf*

64 *f* *mf*

70 *f*

75 *shred!*

77 *ff*

82 Tempo I (♩ = 84)

hazy *sfz - p* *sfz - p* *mp*

94

like an echo *mf* *mp*

104

mf *f* *pp*

105 *p* *mf* *mp* *p* *non dim.*

dying away

2. stink bug secretions contain surprising medicinal value

ca. 30''

Freely - cadenza (♩ = ca. 60) timbral trill → tongue pizz. → key clicks

straight tone add vib. *tr*

Alto Flute

p *mf* *f* *p*

ca. 30''

2

mp *mf* *f* *n*

3 Luxurious, unhurried (♩ = 60)
mysterious, exotic

p *mf*

6 becoming aggressive

flutter ord.

f *sub. p*

12

9

pp *mf*

13 jet whistle

ord.

f *mf*

tr

17 shimmering
 (play) *f mp* *mf*
 (sing)

20 opaque, veiled
p mp f
 jet whistle

24 ord.
sub. p sfz - pp f
 tongue pizz. → key clicks

26 smoothly
mp p n
 gradually slow trill velocity

www.josephheidson.com

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35 *f*

3 3

37 *mf*

3 3

41 *f*

3 3

44 *sfz - p* *mf*

46 **Tempo I** (♩ = 138)

stacc. *key slaps* *ord.* *sim.*

3 5

48

6 6

51 *f*

f

54 *mp*

mp

57 *p*

p 6 6

59 *f* *ff*

f ff